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Seventy-first year

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7774th meeting

Wednesday, 21 September 2016, 9.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Key	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Domingos Augusto
	China	Mr. Wang Yi
	Egypt	President Al Sisi
	France	Mr. Ayrault
	Japan	Mr. Abe
	Malaysia	Mr. Hamidi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Senegal	President Sall
	Spain	Mr. García Margallo
	Ukraine	President Poroshenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnson
	United States of America	Mr. Kerry
	Uruguay	Mr. Nin Novoa
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Ms. Rodríguez Gómez

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General, Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to the His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I thank Prime Minister Key for organizing this very important meeting.

The Syrian tragedy shames us all. The collective failure of the international community should haunt every member of the Security Council. Well over 300,000 Syrians have been killed, half of the country's population has been uprooted and much of its infrastructure lies in ruins. Many Syrians fear the fragmentation of their State could follow, with Da'esh and Al-Qaida affiliates poised to exploit further chaos. Neighbouring countries are hosting millions of Syrian refugees, while many lose their lives trying to reach Europe. Forces unleashed by the conflict are destabilizing the region. Terrorist attacks linked to the crisis have struck around the world. Global norms of humanitarian law have been flagrantly violated. We have seen indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian facilities, the medieval tactic of sieges and the weaponization of hunger, the use of chemical weapons, including attacks recently attributed to Da'esh and the Syrian Government. Tens of thousands of men, women and children remain in arbitrary detention, in appalling conditions and systematically subjected to unspeakable torture. Meanwhile, foreign fighters and arms flow to all sides. All of that defies the resolutions of the Council.

Tragically, the divisons inside Syria are too often amplified by regional divisions, and then mirrored in the Council. Those divisions condemn Syria to its terrible fate. Yet we know that international unity can make a difference. Council unity and resolve led to the elimination of Syria's previously denied chemical weapons and attribution of responsibility for their use. Food and medicine have been delivered to millions of Syrians, including across front lines and via air drops to besieged and hard-to-reach areas. And the formation of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) provided fresh momentum to the search for a settlement and paved the way for resolution 2254 (2015).

A cessation of hostilities, albeit fragile, began in late February, with positive results for a few months. In that window, the United Nations intensified humanitarian operations and brought the parties to Geneva for talks. But that process was once again overwhelmed by violence. The long-sought agreement between the Russian Federation and the United States concluded on 9 September represents a new opportunity. The attack on a United Nations-Syrian Arab Red Crescent humanitarian convoy two days ago was an outrage that resulted in several casualties and forced the United Nations to suspend aid operations. I am looking at options for vigorously investigating that and similar atrocities against civilians. I am also concerned about the earlier attack in Deir ez-Zor, in which dozens of lives were lost. I take note of the rapid acknowledgement by the United States of that strike and look forward to more information.

We must remain determined that the ceasefire will be revived. I urge everyone to use their influence now — today — to ensure that it does. This is a chance to reinstate the cessation of hostilities, faciliate humanitarian aid to Aleppo and throughout the country, ground the Syrian air force and see joint military action against terrorist groups, such as Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front. If we can do that, it would open the road to political talks.

As soon as a new round of intra-Syrian negotiations begins, they must focus on the fundamental issues for a viable transition, in particular — and I use the exact

words of the mediators' summary of the last round of talks —

> "how power is to be exercised in practice by the transitional governance, including in relation to the presidency, executive powers and the control of Government and security institutions".

The ISSG has already signalled its support for that approach. It urged the parties,

> "to reach agreement on a framework for a genuine political transition, which would include a broad, inclusive transitional body with full executive power".

And the ISSG co-Chairs formally requested that the United Nations develop proposals as a starting point for future tasks. With my strong backing, Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura will be ready to present to the parties a draft framework of proposals as a starting point for negotiations for a Syrian-owned and Syrian-led political transition. We are fully guided by resolution 2254 (2015), the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and the ISSG statement, as well as the clear agenda for intra-Syrian talks laid out in resolution 2254 (2015).

I have asked the Special Envoy to work intensively towards convening formal negotiations as soon as possible. I call on the Security Council to fully support the Special Envoy as he proceeds in that manner, with no ifs, ands or buts. We have to unequivocally move ahead towards a credible political process. I expect all to use their influence with the Syrian parties to make sure they come to talks ready to genuinely negotiate the core issues of political transition. No country's destiny should rest on what happens with a single individual. If one side continues to insist that the powers of the Office of the President are not subject to negotiation, by definition there cannot be a negotiated settlement. If another side insists that the President simply depart at the very outset of a transition, it is difficult to see a genuine negotiation take place.

Transition is not an end in itself; it is a process by which the Syrian people can achieve a new, peaceful and democratic reality while protecting their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and uniting against terrorism. The transition must ensure the continuity and reform of State institutions and public services in the country. That requires an inclusive set of governance arrangements that ensure that power is exercised differently and responsibly from the way it has been until now.

There is also a profound need for accountability. The Government has mercilessly trampled on human rights. Opposition groups have done some of the same. Terrorist groups parade images of their cruelty before the global public with perverse glee. For the world not to pursue the perpetrators of such brutality would be a grave abdication of duty. It would deny Syrian justice and healing. It would shred the credibility of an international community that claims to be concerned about upholding our common humanity.

I note that the Security Council itself has said that those who use chemical weapons in Syria must be held accountable. I repeat my call on the Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. Members of the Government who gave orders or were part of the chain of command must be brought to account. Others on the battlefield must also be brought into the halls of justice. And there can be no doubt that any durable settlement will have to ensure a proper framework for transitional justice and reconciliation if Syria is to overcome the horrors of this war.

We are at a make-or-break moment. I challenge everyone to use their influence now to restore our cessation of hostilies, enable the delivery of humanitarian assistance everywhere it is needed, and support the United Nations in charting a political path for the Syrians to negotiate a way out of the hell in which they are trapped. In their service as members of the Security Council, those present have no higher responsibility now.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. De Mistura.

Mr. De Mistura: The Secretary-General has spoken powerfully about this terrible conflict and the need to open the road to political talks that focus on the fundamental issues for a viable transition. He has requested that I be ready to present to the parties a draft framework of proposals as a starting point — nothing more than a starting point, but an important starting point — for negotiations for a Syrian-owned and Syrian-led political transition. And we are ready. Let me offer now a few observations in this regard. We owe them to the Security Council.

First, we believe that the United Nations has done its due dilligence in order to understand the needs and fears of all sides, even if their own starting positions continue to be distant. Over the past two years, the United Nations has engaged extensively with Syrian stakeholders, whether in Geneva consultations or in three rounds of formal proximity talks, technical discussions. shuttle diplomacy in the region and through the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) and the 18 Special Envoys from all over the world, civil society — and, frankly also to a large extent, with the Syrian Women's Advisory Board — with representatives of Syria. I have taken into account all the input from these engagements.

Secondly, despite the horrors on the ground, we have been pleasantly surprised by the fact that some points of convergence have emerged from the intra-Syrian talks about what essential governing princples should frame the transition and any end-state consititutional arrangement for Syria in the future. These commalities demonstrate how potentially close the visions of each side are, at least on the following point: an open, civil, all-inclusive, non-sectarian, pluralistic, democratic, unified State based upon the rule of law, in which all components of Syrian society are recognized, respected and whose fundamental freedoms are enshrined and protected in a new constitution. These are, at least verbally, what they seem to be agreeing upon.

Thirdly, in the third round of our intra-Syrian talks, both sides have accepted that the agenda was indeed a political transition. The Secretary-General referred to the mediator's summary a few minutes ago, which in fact has captured further commonalities on a transition and set out the issues that need to be addressed to ensure a viable transition. That summary was subsequently endorsed by the ISSG — and I am glad that we have the ISSG; we had been waiting for it for more than a year, and it does provide a lot of support to the Special Envoy, as we were alone before it — as the basis for the next round of intra-Syrian negotiations. The ISSG urged the parties "to reach agreement on a framework for a genuine political transition". It was within this context that on 26 July the ISSG requested that we develop some proposals. As soon as the talks resume, it is my intention to put proposals to all sides as a starting point for negotiations and as a means by which to move to direct talks, and no longer just proximity talks. The Secretary-General has indeed been encouraging me and requesting that I present a draft framework to move the sides towards a transition through negotiation.

Fourthly, any proposal that I may present would proceed upon the basis that the conflict in Syria cannot be resolved militarly — we say that all the time, but sometimes fail to practice it — but rather only through a a Syrian-owned and -led political negotiating process between the Government and the opposition, in which a framework is agreed based upon mutual consent, capable of effecting a genuine and irreversible political transition leading to a new constitution, and free and fair elections under international supervision, while preserving continuity — we are not looking for what happened in Libya, for instance — and reformed State institutions, in accordance with resolution 2254 (2015).

Fifthly, in our view, any viable transition must inevitably do the follwing. First, it must address how power is to be exercised in practice by the transitional Government, including in relation to the presidency's executive powers and control over Government and security institutions. This is something that the Syrians have to decide, but they need to address it among them. Secondly, the transition must involve power-sharing and a phased and genuinine power-devolution exercise during transition in an agreed manner in accordance with good governance, principles and subject to domestic and international guarantees. Thirdly, it must require the creation of collective transitional bodies to oversee a national ceasefire, humanitarian relief, the creation of a calm, neutral environment to enable free, peaceful political activity to occur in relation to the adoption of a new constitution, and the holding of free and fair elections under international supervision. I know it seems like a dream, but that is the plan, and if we do not do that it will not be possible to actually get there. Fourthly, it must be accompanied by sustained, international efforts to help reconstruct Syria, discussions are already taking place about how to prepare for reconstructing Syria as soon as genuinine and verifiable transition gets under way.

Therefore, ideally, the Government would need to understand that the transition involves a genuinine devolution of power and not just the absorption of the opposition into the current Government. While the opposition should also understand that the transition is not solely about one person or one presidency, but it is actually related to a transfer not only of power from one political group to another, but actually it is about how

power should be exercised differently as Syria moves forward through Syrian negotiations.

Above all, the sides need to recognize that any transition needs to be all-inclusive and agreed among them — as the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex) clearly states — through mutual consent. I take note of the inputs that we have received from both sides, the Government and the opposition, in this process. I also take note of the High Negotiation Committee's description of its own recent vision statement as a living document, and therefore a document that can evolve. This is the kind of approach that negotiations need to have in order to be developed.

I appeal, therefore, to the Security Council to reflect carefully on what the Secretary-General has just said. It was an important statement. It was a statement that he made by choosing his words carefully, because he feels strongly about this terrible conflict, which has been ongoing for five years of his tenure. I have added a few points and I hope that all Syrian parties understand that if peace is to be made and they are to save their own country, there is a need for a transition that will require a genuine readiness to negotiate and compromise. They should also be present at the next talks. This is an opportunity we would like to offer them.

Let me finish by saying, because obviously we cannot ignore the elephant in the room, that all of this will and can be heavily affected if we build on the agreement reached on 9 September between the two co-Chairs of the ISSG, which gave us a lot of hope, and on the basis of which we have been working even harder to renew talks.

The President: I thank Mr. De Mistura for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Prime Minister of New Zealand.

New Zealand has convened today's high-level meeting on the situation in the Middle East for one simple reason — no other issue more urgently demands the attention of world leaders. The Syrian civil war is the most devastating conflict of the twenty-first century. We see a country shattered, terrorism and extremism rampant, and the daily horrors of the deliberate displacement, starving and killing of civilians. We join the Secretary-General in condemning Monday's attack on a humanitarian convoy. There is no justification for attacking those who are trying to save lives. Longer term, we will need to hold to account those most responsible for the appalling atrocities we have witnessed. This includes those responsible for chemical weapons attacks.

The scale of the Syrian refugee crisis has shocked the world. It has impacted millions of people in the region and beyond. The conflict has created security threats that reach well beyond Syria's borders. After more than five years of violence, Syria has become a byword for failure — failure of the parties and their supporters to put peace and the lives of innocent people ahead of self-interest and zero-sum politics; failure to respond to the crisis early to prevent this tragedy; and a collective political failure, including on the part of the Security Council, to do what must be done to end the conflict.

Today's meeting is a chance for an open and honest discussion on how peace can be achieved. It is critical that we rewrite this narrative of failure and help set Syria on a path to peace. Let me be clear. No one will benefit from a continuation of this conflict. The Syrian Government, which bears responsibility for starting this war, cannot win, nor can the many others whose support is allowing the conflict to continue. Ultimately, Syrians must reach an agreement on their future Government, but at this point it is clear that Syrians by themselves cannot end this war.

The problem is not a lack of direction. The pathway for ending this conflict was set out by the Security Council in resolution 2254 (2015) in December 2015. The resolution identified the steps required: a nationwide ceasefire, negotiations on a political transition and a united front for fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other terrorist groups. It also established a timetable for implementing them, but that timetable itself was never implemented. Today, we all need to commit to restoring the cessation of hostilities, delivering aid to those who need it, and restarting political talks. Last week's arrangement between United States Secretary of State Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov represents the best hope we have seen in some time. We encourage Russia and the United States to show sustained leadership and not let this opportunity slip away.

The next few days will be critical in restoring the cessation of hostilities and getting humanitarian aid flowing. We urge the Syrian parties to abide by the arrangement. The Council should unite to back those

efforts. A political solution needs to address the causes of the conflict and establish a new form of inclusive Government. It must provide more than just cosmetic change with regard to the central question of President Bashar Al-Assad's future. A political solution will involve unpalatable choices for both sides. It will take courage and, most of all, pragmatism. Anyone who insists on political red lines that block the necessary compromises will have to measure the delay they cause in terms of more lives lost, more refugees and more suffering. Those with influence must reinforce the message to the parties and to the Syrian Government that a political solution is the only way out of this conflict, and they must back these words with their actions. This means encouraging the parties to seek outcomes around the negotiating table, rather than on the battlefield. It also means not using the fight against terrorism as an excuse to shift our focus from achieving a political solution. Terrorism is a major consequence of the Syrian war, but it did not cause it.

Those countries with greatest ability to influence events have a particular responsibility in this regard. I speak in particular of those the Secretary-General identified in his General Assembly address last year (see A/70/PV.13) as being key to resolving this conflict: the United States, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. We call on those countries to work together to restore the cessation of hostilities over the next few days. Advancing a political solution must be the priority in the weeks ahead. The people of Syria deserve this much.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): It is clear that the region of the Middle East and North Africa is undergoing a period of serious upheaval as a result of the conjunction of inter-ethnic and inter-religious clashes with the unprecedented eruptions of terrorism and extremism that have enveloped Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Syria and have disturbed a number of other countries, including some in Africa. The potential deterioration of the situation presents the likelihood of increasingly serious threats to international stability and security.

This is hardly the first time that such a state of affairs is the direct consequence of the heinous practice of geopolitical engineering, interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, and attempts to replace objectionable regimes, including by violent means. It is fair to say that the situation in Syria is particularly worrying. Since the very beginning of the crisis, Russia has consistently advocated an exclusively peaceful solution arrived at while respecting the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of that ancient nation. We continue to believe firmly that there is no alternative to a political process based on a mutually respectful, inclusive intra-Syrian dialogue without preconditions, while ensuring an end to hostilities, the expansion of humanitarian access and a more effective fight against terrorism.

That complex position has been clearly affirmed in the decisions of the International Syria Support Group and the Security Council's resolutions, particularly resolution 2254 (2015). In order to fulfil the provisions of that resolution, Russia and the United States, as co-Chairs of the International Syria Support Group, arrived at a specific arrangement, which took more than six months to produce and was completed on 9 September, after the Presidents of Russia and the United States, meeting three days earlier in China, had reached final agreement on the last remaining issues to be resolved.

I apologize for referring to documents that almost no one in the Chamber has seen. As ever, Russia is prepared to make them public and distribute them within the United Nations. It is important to note that the Russian-American agreement emphasizes that one of its key priorities is distinguishing the opposition forces from those of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Jabhat Al-Nusra, in order to put the ceasefire into effect, resolve humanitarian issues and, most importantly, end terrorists' attempts to evade punishment by using the pretext of their cooperation with the so-called moderates participating in the ceasefire regime.

The arrangements came into force on 12 September, and I should say once again that the fact that they are not yet publicly available prevents us from comparing them with what has been done and by whom, but I can give one example. The arrangements required ensuring safe passage for humanitarian access along the Castello Road and that therefore both the Government and the opposition, which were controlling various sectors of that road, should withdraw their forces to an equal distance from the road. That distance was specifically fixed in the agreements. The Government forces began

to withdraw, as required in the Russian-United States agreement, only to see that the opposition was not only not reciprocating but in fact began shelling the Government forces. That happened more than once, and the opposition has still not withdrawn from the Castello Road, as the 9 September agreements required. In general, through its Ministry of Defence, Russia has been continually monitoring the activity on the Castello Road and around Aleppo, and the Ministry's website shows very clearly who is complying with the agreements and who is not.

Last week, through the operational monitoring centre we established in Geneva with our United States partners, we informed our American colleagues about 300 cases of violations of the ceasefire regime by Ahrar Al-Sham and a number of other opposition groups, including some whose names were provided to us as supposedly participating in the ceasefire. There were violations in Aleppo and the provinces of Hama, Homs, Latakia and Dar'a, as well as in the suburbs of Damascus. I would like to stress that the information we passed on is reliable. It comes not from Internet or media reports but was obtained on the ground by Russian military monitoring groups and it corresponds to specific facts. The violations include shelling using light weapons, mortars, multiple rocket launchers and homemade shells. The strikes on 16 September by the opposition coalition against Government forces' positions in Deir ez-Zor were a clear violation of the ceasefire, and as soon as they occurred, ISIL launched an attack on the Government forces. Another unacceptable provocation took place on 19 September, when a United Nations humanitarian convoy was attacked near Aleppo in an opposition-controlled area. It should be noted, by the way, that on that same day, in the same area, known as the Ramusa road, Jabhat Al-Nusra and its allies carried out an aggressive attack on Government forces. As a result, the jihadists were able to make progress in the 10-70 sector.

I do not have any proof, but I am certain that such coincidences should be thoroughly analysed and investigated, particularly the attack on the humanitarian convoy. Many people said that it could have been a rocket or artillery shelling — that was what we were informed originally — and then they started talking about helicopters and then airplanes. I think we should restrain the emotional instinct that makes us instantly reach for the microphone to comment and should rather conduct a thorough, professional investigation. I should mention that the distance between where the incident occurred and the epicentre, to the west of Aleppo, where Al-Nusra is, is no more than five or seven kilometres. Russia has provided all the information it has obtained about the attack on the convoy, including real-time video. In general, in spite of our appeals, which are to be found in Security Council decisions on the importance of exerting influence over the various armed opposition groups, the results have so far been extraordinarily limited.

I mentioned the list provided to us by our American partners of the 150 or so organizations named as participants in the ceasefire regime, but for a long time now, and officially since 12 September, more than 20 of them have declared that they will not comply with the agreement. That list also includes Ahrar Al-Sham, which, by the way, when drafting resolution 2254 (2015), we proposed including on the list of terrorist organizations, together with another group, Jaysh Al-Islam. At the time, however, our partners said that would make it impossible for us to work effectively, and as a gesture of goodwill we decided not to insist on that, limiting the terrorist list to Jabhat Al-Nusra and the so-called Islamic State. Well, after the ceasefire's entry into force, on 12 September, the leadership of Ahrar Al-Sham stated officially that it would not abide by the agreements because they describe Al-Nusra as a terrorist organization. Ahrar Al-Sham does not consider it to be a terrorist organization, and in fact works closely with it.

I believe, therefore, that the time has come to think about revisiting the list of terrorist organizations, especially since a specific incident occurred in the past few days in the north of Hama province, where Syrian forces were defending against attacks by the Jund Al-Aqsa group in the El Khabare and Maan areas. Regarding the fighting there, some have accused the Syrian Government forces of violating the ceasefire, but yesterday the United States stated that it had added Jund Al-Aqsa to the list of terrorist organizations, so I hope that no one will demand that we cease hostilities against that group. I just wanted to mention that example, on top of what I just pointed out about Ahrar Al-Sham, since they will probably require that we revisit the list. There has to be an end to covering up for those who are opposed to peace and refuse to comply with the agreements and with the Security Council's resolutions, and they should be considered equivalent to terrorists. In the past few days, in the Damascus

area, Jaysh Al-Islam has been trying to gain territory in eastern Ghouta, while at the same time there have been intensive attacks on Government forces by Jabhat Al-Nusra and Failak Al-Rahman, which is also working in coordination with Al-Nusra in the suburb of Jobar, from where they often use mortars for shelling civilian neighbourhoods in Damascus.

Another lesson that we should like to draw from the latest events is that, in ensuring security during humanitarian operations, the effective participation of all parties to the conflict is necessary, not only that of Syrian and Russian armed forces, to which everyone usually addresses all appeals and requests. The armed groups and their sponsors need to provide relevant guarantees as well. Representatives of the United Nations also need to escort the convoys after receiving such guarantees.

The International Syria Support Group met yesterday, and many colleagues were present. Everyone spoke in favour of resuscitating the cessation of hostilities. Initially the proposal was to ensure three days of calm. We are convinced that that can be achieved only by all the parties to the Syrian conflict without exception, taking simultaneous, parallel steps. Otherwise, nothing will happen. There will not be any unilateral pauses. We have done that already. There were unilateral pauses around Aleppo for 48 and 72 hours, and each time the result was that the insurgents, including Jabhat Al-Nusra, were provided with re-enforcements and military equipment and ammunition during these periods of calm. We therefore can no longer even discuss unilateral measures.

What is needed is that every single member of the International Syria Support Group, especially those mentioned by the President of the Council, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, need to formulate serious guarantees in order to ensure that those units on the ground on whom they have influence will comply with all the provisions of the cessation of hostilities agreement. If we can agree on that type of comprehensive approach, then I believe that the viability of a cessation of hostilities will have a chance. Of course, it will not be enough to reach an agreement, we will have to make sure that the agreement is actually implemented.

Finally, I would like to say that we have always made a top priority of the intra-Syrian political dialogue, without any preconditions, as demanded by resolution 2254 (2015) and with the participation of representatives of all ethnic and religious groups, in order to implement the road map set out in the resolution, which should lead to a solution to the Syrian crisis within 18 months — as we had hoped at the time. Otherwise, we will not be able to achieve a lasting solution and preserve Syria as a single, territorially integral State, restore its economy and ensure the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

We support the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Staffan de Mistura, and we call on him to continue working with the Syrian parties to the conflict to ensure the continuity and inclusive character of the negotiating process. Attempts by certain participants to put forward preconditions or ultimatums to sabotage resolution 2254 (2015) are unacceptable. Unfortunately, such attempts have continued, and the United Nations and the Special Envoy should not yield to such blackmail. Negotiations should resume urgently. Those who insist on preconditions should be told that such decisions run counter to the demands of the Security Council. We are ready to contribute in every way to the efforts carried out by Mr. De Mistura, including by further working with all parties — the Syrian Government and all members of the opposition — without excluding anyone.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. John Kerry, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mr. Kerry (United States of America): I want to thank my colleague from New Zealand in particular for convening this very important meeting on the crisis in Syria. I believe that it is appropriate that we are gathering here a couple of rooms over from where yesterday so many Heads of State came together in what I thought was a remarkably moving and eloquent statement of the consequence of the war in Syria. I listened particularly to King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein talk about the impact on his country and the millions of people who are distorting its economy, putting huge pressures on the social structure of the country, living under the worst circumstances and, in some areas, presenting a threat because of the ability of Da'esh/ the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham or the Al-Nusra Front to slip people in, posing a security threat to the country.

We listened to the young Olympian tell us about her dreams and how she was able to compete this year because of a refugee Olympic team. We saw the images in a video beautifully narrated by Bono that really

made us think about the consequences of that. I hope that everybody will come here today really focused on those consequences and not engage in word games that duck responsibility or avoid the choices that this great institution has in front of it with respect to war and peace and life and death.

I listened to my colleague from Russia, and I felt as though I were in a parallel universe here. He said that nobody should have any preconditions to come to the table. Well, we twice met in Vienna. We met here in New York and embraced a Security Council resolution. We met again in Munich. And in each place, the International Syria Support Group and the Security Council embraced a ceasefire applicable to all parties. That is not a precondition. That is an international agreement — arrived at four times. Countries have said that they will do this, and four times it has been shredded by independent actors and spoilers who do not want a ceasefire. That is therefore not a precondition.

How can people go sit at a table with a regime that bombs hospitals, drops chlorine gas — again and again and again and again and again and again — and acts with impunity? Are you supposed to sit there and have happy talk in Geneva under such circumstances, when you have signed to a ceasefire and do not adhere to it? What kind of credibility do you have with any of your people? It is not a precondition. It is something upon which we all agreed in the United Nations and the International Syria Support Group.

I have to say with regard to the documents that we are prepared release — as we told people and announced yesterday at the International Syria Support Group, and people in the Support Group have the documents — you do not need to read them to understand that it is against international law to bomb hospitals. You do not need the documents to understand that you do not drop barrel bombs on children. Those are flagrant violations of international law.

Therefore, I do not want to obfuscate this process. I did not come here this morning to do that. Supposedly, we all want the same goal — I have heard that again and again. Russia, Iran, the United States, Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia — everybody sits here and says that they want a united Syria: secular and respectful of the rights of all people, and where the people of Syria can choose their leadership. However, we are proving woefully inadequate in our ability to get to the table, to have that conversation, to make it happen. Everybody in this Chamber understands that there are proxies at this table and proxies outside of the Chamber — and we know who they are — who have the ability to have an impact on the players in this conflict that has provided the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the Second World War.

Let us review the sequence of events. I was privileged to serve in the United States Senate with a fellow who spent a lot of time here: he was the Ambassador of the United States to the United Nations, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He would famously remind us that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. As President John Adams once said, "facts are stubborn things". If we are going to deal with this situation, I do not think that we can let anybody here have their own set of facts about Syria.

Everybody here understands the depth of the human tragedy. One wonders why people in various parts of the world are so angry about governance: it is because all they hear are words. We know how many times we have demanded action, which then does not take place. Therefore, I want to share some facts with you this morning. Last night we received reports of air strikes that hit a medical facility near Aleppo and four aid workers were killed, despite the fact there was supposed to be a cessation of hostilities. There are only two countries that have aeroplanes that are capable of flying during the night — or flying at all — in that particular area: Russia and Syria.

As Minister Lavrov said, let us examine the facts and see what happened. On Monday, 20 aid workers were killed in an outrageous sustained two-hour attack directed at a fully authorized humanitarian mission near Aleppo. All of the permits had been given, and everybody was on notice. That attack has dealt a very heavy blow to our efforts to bring peace to Syria, and it raises a profound doubt about whether Russia and the Al-Assad regime can or will live up to the obligations that they agreed to in Geneva.

Questions are also raised — not by that attack but by other events — about some of the opposition. Those are facts. The simple reality is that we cannot resolve this crisis if the major parties who come to the table and agree to do something are unwilling to do what is necessary to avoid escalation. We do not get anywhere by ignoring the facts and by denying common sense. The United States-led coalition did hit people on Saturday;

it was a terrible accident, and within moments of it happening we acknowledged it. We did not cast out a series of obfuscating facts, instead we said that it was a terrible thing and that it happened. The United States Department of Defence apologized, and we tried to find out how it happened.

But people with guns running around on the ground, seen from the air, is a very different thing from trucks in a convoy with big United Nations markings all over them. I want to lay out those facts because they underscore why, at this moment, we just cannot do business as usual. We cannot walk out of this Chamber and say that we are going to try to continue to have a ceasefire, when everybody knows it cannot work. The facts require countries to restore credibility to this process. That is what is critical. Let us think about what happened in the last couple of days.

First, President Putin's Press Secretary, Dmitry Peskov, claimed that the attack on the humanitarian convoy was somehow a necessary response to an alleged offensive by al-Nusra elsewhere in the country: that was the first claim. Then a Russian ambassador said that Russian and Syrian forces were not bombing the area, but that they were targeting the village of Khan Tuman. Then we heard a completely different story: the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation said that the aid convoy had been accompanied by militants in a pick-up truck with a mortar, of which we have, however, seen no evidence. In any case, that would not justify a violation of the cessations of hostilities. In addition, that mortar could never have inflicted the damage caused to those trucks.

Then the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation switched completely and denied Russia's involvement. According to Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov, "neither Russia nor Syria conducted air strikes on the United Nations humanitarian convoy in the southwestern outskirts of Aleppo". Then Konashenkov went further and said that the damage to the convoy was the direct result of the cargo catching fire, that the trucks and the food and the medicine just spontaneously combusted. Does anybody here believe that? This is not a joke we are involved in. We are in serious business here. If we can stand up and say that we did accidentally have a strike, then we should have some responsibility. Maybe it is an attempt to distract attention or somehow deflect the issue, but I think what it underscores is that we have a responsibility here to find a way forward.

Everything I just quoted from Russian sources is contradicted by public information, by conclusions already reached by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, independent journalists and aid workers on the ground, by eyewitnesses. The eyewitnesses will tell you what happened. One of them said that he was standing on the ground, and all of a sudden the place became hell and the fighter jets were in the sky. That is an eyewitness report; the place turned into hell, and fighter jets were in the sky.

There is a lot more that I am not going to go into because I really want the key here to be an acceptance of responsibility, so that we can change this equation, responsibility on the part of everybody here. The primary question is no longer what do we know; the primary question is, collectively, what are we going to do about it?

In other words, this is a moment of truth. It is a moment of truth for President Putin and Russia, it is also a moment of truth for the opposition. It is a moment of truth for the people who support the opposition. For too long some elements of the opposition have relied on an unholy alliance with Al-Nusra. Al-Nusra is Al-Qaida — Al-Qaida's branch in Syria. We cannot look the other way if some groups are on the ground fighting alongside Al-Nusra, an organization that overtly rejects a political solution to this crisis and is an enemy of all of us in this Chamber.

It is a moment of truth for the international community, too. If we allow spoilers to choose the path for us, we will encounter a path of escalation. If we decide not to do what it takes to make this cessation of hostilities work, then make no mistake, my friends, the next time we convene here we are going to be facing a Middle East with even more refugees, more dead, more displaced, more extremists and more suffering on an even greater scale. That is a certainty.

There is only one choice, and that is to get to that table with Staffan de Mistura, to get to a negotiation and get a ceasefire so that we can stop the flow of refugees, stop the suffering, and provide the people of Syria with a chance to breathe, a chance to live. When the ceasefire first began, a few weeks ago, guess what: it worked. Months ago, people were actually out in the streets; they went to cafés again. Some people even demonstrated, felt they had political rights. Other people were able to walk from one place to another with a sense of safety. All of that has dissipated.

I want to emphasize this, and I emphasize to Russia that the United States continues to believe that there is a way forward, which, although rocky and difficult and uncertain, can provide the most viable path out of the carnage. Our shared task here is to find a way to use the tools of diplomacy to make that happen. That is exactly what we have been trying to accomplish.

For weeks over the summer, experts from my Government worked with our counterparts from Russia in good efforts to develop a plan that would take into account the lessons learned from the original cessation of hostilities. The key elements of that plan, launched in Geneva two weeks ago, include the renewal of the cessation of hostilities, excluding only Da'esh and Al-Nusra. Importantly, it included arrangements for the unfettered delivery — unfettered delivery — of humanitarian aid to people in Aleppo and elsewhere in the country. It also envisioned the possibility — provided that the delivery of humanitarian assistance was unimpeded and sustained and provided that there were at least seven days of consecutive adherence to the cessation of hostilities — that the United States and Russia would begin to coordinate their efforts against Da'esh and Al-Nusra.

I wish to make one thing clear. Under President Obama's orders, all preparations were being made in order to achieve that cooperation, involving our military and intelligence community in the work we would do. We are committed to that. It was also a very importantly part of the plan that, when those efforts of cooperation commenced, Syrian warplanes would be prohibited from flying over areas where the legitimate opposition and Al-Nusra were present in order to give us an opportunity to work at separating the two.

I have said to Russia many times: it is very hard to separate people when they are being bombed indiscriminately. While Al-Assad has the right to determine whom he is going to bomb, because he can "go after Al-Nusra" and in the process go after the opposition at the same time because he wants to, confusion is created that is impossible to separate out, and the ceasefire cannot be preserved. That is why we need to get to the prohibition on flying, my friends. That would prevent Syria from doing what it has done so often in the past, which is to attack civilian targets with the excuse that it is just going after Al-Nusra.

Our purpose in the negotiation was to put an end to the kind of horrific and indiscriminate attacks that have been the primary cause of fear, suffering and displacement. Under our plan, all of this could be quickly accompanied by serious negotiations between the parties aimed at a political transition and a conclusion to the conflict. So I wish my colleagues to know that the United States remains convinced that the objectives outlined in the Geneva agreement are the right objectives. As for the tools, many of them are the right tools, but they may not be complete.

Our hope was that the renewal of the cessation of hostilities and the resumption of aid deliveries, the isolation of Al-Nusra and Da'esh, and the beginning of the Syrian-led negotiation process would provide a pathway out of the conflict and make possible the restoration of a peaceful Syria. Now, clearly there are some people, including Al-Assad and his allies, as well as Al-Nusra and Da'esh on the other side, who fear that very outcome. Al-Assad is a spoiler; he does not believe in a ceasefire. Al Nusra and Da'esh are spoilers. They do not want a ceasefire; they want to keep fighting Al-Assad.

Therefore, the question for us here today is whether we bend to their will or continue to pursue our agenda, as best we can and in every way that we can, to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Those who believe that the crisis in Syria cannot become even worse are dead wrong, as are those who believe that a military victory is possible. This could be like Carthage and the Romans, if one can call that a victory.

The plan announced in Geneva is far from perfect, but I have yet to hear an alternative that is remotely realistic and would lead to a better outcome. If we could get monitoring on the ground, that would be ideal. We would love to have monitoring on the ground. But most of the countries one talks to and asks if they would go in to monitor are very quick to say, "not on my life".

As my colleagues from the International Syria Support Group will attest, yesterday we had a meeting. There was near unanimity in that room that this process, the ceasefire, as troubled as it is, gives us the best chance available to bring relief to the people of Syria. Now, here is the nub of it. We have said for days that it will take significant and immediate steps now to try to get things back on track. How do we get things back on track? How do we restore the concept of a ceasefire? How do we give people, who have again and again seen this process fall apart, some sense of confidence in the process? Believe me, there are a lot of people who

believe that it cannot happen. There are some people who believe that the major parties do not want it done.

So, I believe that in order to restore credibility to the process, we must move forward to try to immediately ground all aircraft flying in those key areas in order to de-escalate the situation and give a chance for humanitarian assistance to flow unimpeded. If that happens, there is a chance to give credibility back to this process. In Geneva, Russia related that Al-Assad was prepared to live by the cessation of hostilities and would accept the idea of not flying over agreed-upon areas. But because of what has happened in the past few days, my friends, we have no choice but to try to do that sooner, not later, to move immediately to restore confidence and demonstrate the readiness to implement a genuine ceasefire now.

The future of Syria is hanging by a thread. I urge the Council not to give up, but instead to support the steps outlined by the United States and Russia in Geneva. I call on every party in Syria and those who support them. I call on all members of the opposition to cooperate and revive this plan. I call on every country to cease providing support of any kind to any party that is trying to sabotage this plan. I call on the international community to support United Nations efforts to begin a real negotiation in Geneva on a political transition that can provide the only durable route to peace. I urge the entire international community to get behind the best chance that we have had yet to reduce the violence, to provide humanitarian assistance and to open up the space for negotiations.

The President: I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of Egypt.

President Al Sisi (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me begin by thanking Mr. John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, for convening this meeting.

I would like to express my deepest condolences to United Nations workers who were targeted by a cowardly attack two days ago while trying to fulfil their mission to bring humanitarian assistance to civilians. That should not go uncontested.

We are here today not merely to examine the heartbreaking tragedy in Syria, which we have all been following on a daily basis, but rather to assume our responsibility as member States of the Security Council, charged with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security and to find a practical and swift formula to stop the bloodshed in Syria and to bring an end to the five years of conflict and reach a unified vision for a comprehensive solution to the Syrian crisis — one that rescues our brethren in Syria from their prolonged ordeal.

Five years have passed, and the bloodshed in Syria has not stopped, with hundreds of thousands of Syrians killed and with millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. The political solution remains elusive. Syria continues to suffer the rapacity of regional and international parties that are seeking to exploit its predicament for their own narrow interests, thereby creating a breeding ground for vicious terrorism, which is hijacking the future of Syria.

Allow me to speak frankly about what I believe to be the root causes of the problem and the inherent flaws in prior attempts to contain the crisis. An honest and critical reading of the Syrian crisis over the past five years is imperative if we are to overcome our differences and move forward to save Syria and its people. I would like to summarize my remarks in three key points.

First, any honest and fair reading of the previous attempts to deal with the Syrian crisis thus far leads us to one conclusion: we have become overly preoccupied with the symptoms rather than the root causes of the problem. We continue to be consumed in recurring debates on reaching interim arrangements, ceasefires or cessations of hostilities to reduce the killing and destruction, or in attempts to alleviate the ensuing humanitarian disaster, and so forth. We have failed, however, to move forward in addressing the core problem, which is the absence of a just and comprehensive political solution that takes into account the legitimate aspirations of the people of Syria.

We welcome the cessation of hostilities reached a few days ago thanks to the efforts of Russia and the United States. This cessation of hostilities led to a decrease in violence despite certain violations and the refusal of certain parties, supported by the outside, to uphold their responsibilities, and insisting on hijacking the future of Syria. Despite all of those violations, the agreement was necessary to reduce violence. However, such an agreement in itself is not enough. It must be complemented by an immediate resumption of political negotiations in order to reach a just, final and comprehensive solution to the Syrian crisis. I hereby call upon Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura to invite

all parties to the next round of negotiations as soon as possible.

Secondly, the broad outlines of any political solution in Syria are quite obvious. However, transforming those outlines into practical measures on the ground requires upholding the principles of the national unity and territorial integrity of Syria and maintaining equality among each of its citizens across the political and social spectrums, with the single exception of terrorist organizations, which cannot have a place in the future of Syria that we all hope for. There is no place for terrorism in Syria, nor is there room for attempts to re-brand the terrorist organizations. We therefore categorically reject any attempts to circumvent Security Council resolutions that designate those groups as terrorist organizations.

Thirdly, it is important that we recognize that we are running short of time. Every day that passes by with Syria's wounds still open offers yet another opportunity for terrorism to flourish and for sectarianism to undermine the foundations of the nation-State in Syria and the Levant. Let me be honest: anyone who thinks that there can be a military solution to the Syrian crisis is mistaken, and anyone who believes that terrorist organizations can play a role in Syria's future is delusional.

Our experiences during the Geneva and Vienna meetings and with resolution 2254 (2015) have proved beyond any doubt that finding common ground among the key stakeholders of the Syrian crisis is not impossible and that we can make significant progress towards a political settlement in record time should there be a political will to do so.

Egypt's experience in hosting an all-inclusive conference for the various moderate Syrian opposition groups in June 2015, which brought together Syrians from across the political spectrum, with no foreign interference, has shown that these parties can agree on comprehensive documents that draw a road map for the transition out of the current plight in Syria. The Cairo Conference documents were produced by Syrians without any interference from a non-Syrian party. They clearly demonstrate that it is possible to find a Syrian solution to the crisis. Council members must have all noticed that these documents have been the foundation of every subsequent effort, Syrian or international, to put forward a practical political settlement.

The road ahead is clear. The implementation of the cessation of hostilities should be developed into a comprehensive ceasefire in Syria, which would, in turn, guarantee the free passage of humanitarian assistance to civilians in besieged and hard-to-reach areas. As Council members know, Egypt has succeeded in delivering humanitarian aid on two occasions to more than five besieged areas in Syria, thanks to our open channels of communications with all the different parties and stakeholders. We continue to count on the commitment of all parties to the agreement on the cessation of hostilities as a necessary step towards easing the humanitarian tragedy and delivering aid to those affected by the conflict.

We reaffirm our readiness to provide all kinds of support to this endeavour. However, the revival of serious political negotiations remains a necessary condition for the cessation of hostilities to hold and for humanitarian access to continue. History has taught us that no ceasefire arrangements have ever endured without a political prospect that addresses the root causes of the crisis. Syria is no exception.

Egypt's vision of a solution in Syria is based on two pillars. First, the national unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian State must be preserved and the collapse of its institutions prevented. Secondly, the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people to rebuild their own State through an acceptable political solution that represents them all and creates an enabling environment for reconstruction efforts must be upheld. From this point of view, we value the efforts of Special Envoy De Mistura and we support his work for the resumption of political negotiations immediately and without delay. In that context, we reaffirm the importance of including representatives from the Syrian Government together with all opposition groups without discrimination in the negotiations, in order for the negotiations to bear fruit, in accordance with resolution 2254 (2015).

We have no more time to lose. With the passing of each day more blood will be spilled and more innocent Syrians will continue to suffer. Egypt remains eager to communicate with all parties to the Syrian crisis and is committed to working with our partners in the region and the international community to provide every kind of support for the much-needed political solution in Syria. It is our collective responsibility to restore hope to the people of Syria. It is time for us to assume this responsibility and tackle the root causes of the problem immediately and without any delay.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine.

President Poroshenko: First of all, I would like to thank Prime Minister Key for his initiative to convene this important high-level meeting. I also commend the presidency of New Zealand for the excellent manner in which it has organized the work of the Security Council this month.

The Security Council was created 71 years ago to bear the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It was meant to stop ongoing conflicts and prevent looming ones. Back in 2000, upon the initiative of Ukraine, the Council held its historic, first-ever summit meeting (see S/PV.4194), in which it adopted a declaration pledging, inter alia,

> "to ensure the effective functioning of the collective security system established by the Charter" (*resolution 1318 (2000), annex*). That summit became one of many success stories throughout the history of the United Nations.

Yet, there have been many dramatic failures. One of them has been unfolding in front of us in Syria for over five years. The conflict in that country is a tragedy for millions of people and a serious challenge for the international community. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed; over 13 million have been forced out of their homes. These numbers are appalling, and all the more so when we think of the countless personal tragedies behind them.

The conflict has already had many serious negative consequences: uncontrolled migration, the escalation of terrorism, the expansion of the Islamic State and other extremist groups, to name but a few. Yet it poses other serious risks, including igniting a wider sectarian war in the region. We are of the view that the Syrian Government bears full responsibility for its country's present condition and for the terrible sufferings of the Syrian people.

It was with the utmost dismay that we learned just two days ago of a barbaric attack on a humanitarian convoy in Aleppo. That crime came after the Syrian regime's unilateral withdrawal from the week-long ceasefire. It is nothing but a clear proof of the culture of impunity that has fuelled the Syrian conflict. That outrageous lack of accountability is a stain on this Council.

At the same time, it is external support for the Al-Assad regime, in particular from Russia, that has contributed significantly to the disastrous status quo and to the recurrent waves of violence. As was the case in Ukraine, those actions were part of an intentional policy to first stir up hostilities, raise the stakes and then offer yourself as a mediator in the settlement process. In the meantime, you may grab ground and secure your position for imposing any solution you please. That strategy sounds pretty familiar to my own country, Ukraine, which continues to be a testing ground for very similar Russian tactics.

The United Nations and the Security Council have failed to bring peace and security to Syria. That failure undermines the whole mission of the United Nations and challenges its very existence. The inaction of the Council in dealing with the armed Russian aggression against Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea has allowed Moscow to use the peninsula as a military outpost for projecting power in Syria. As war there rages on, huge numbers of Russian war assets are deployed to Syria via ships based in Crimea, occupied by Russian troops. That highlights once again the absolutely urgent and critical need to reform the Council, particularly with regard to the veto power. No veto should be able to block the Council's action when it has to respond to situations of mass atrocities. With so many lives lost in recent decades due to such crimes, we must finally start the process of removing that obstacle to ensure a more effective Security Council.

We strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons, barrel bombs, torture and other crimes being committed in Syria, specifically against civilians. Again, these are flagrant violations of international law. We insist that those responsible for these horrific crimes be brought to justice. The recent findings of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism must be duly taken into account by the international community. Furthermore, we condemn the denial of humanitarian access to those in need — let along the bombing of aid convoys — and sieges against civilian population. Any and all employment of such tactics as a tool of war is a serious violation of international humanitarian law and must be stopped immediately.

Ukraine once again reaffirms the imperative of full compliance with the fundamental principles and norms of international law everywhere, at all times and by all. The political process in Syria should be aimed

at restoring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country and establishing a credible, inclusive transitional governing body with ample executive power. That should be done in full compliance with the Geneva principles of 30 June 2012 and resolution 2254 (2015). That is to be followed by the drafting of a new constitution and elections.

A genuine political transition should be the first and foremost priority for the Council and for all those involved. The parties to the conflict, both inside and outside Syria, will have to prove with deeds — not words — that they are committed to meeting their obligations and to fulfilling their agreements, including the most recent. We are convinced that there is no alternative to a diplomatic solution of the conflict and call for consolidating international efforts to put an end to this tragedy.

Sixteen years ago, in the declaration I referred to at the beginning of my statement, our predecessors pledged, "to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing conflict" (*resolution 1318 (2000), annex, p.2*). We cannot afford to fail this time.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Prime Minister Key for convening this timely high-level debate on the human tragedy ravaging the Syrian people. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his recent briefing and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura.

Whatever one's point of view on the Syrian conflict, which is entering its sixth year, there is one clear image in all of our minds — a country ravaged by war; a country in ruins; a land of fire, tears and blood. The situation in Syria is one of the worst humanitarian disasters of our time. Over 300,000 dead have left behind broken families scarred by mourning and suffering, and there is no end to the gruesome accounts emerging. How many orphans, how many widows, how many elderly people abandoned to their sad fate without any assistance, how many wounded and disabled for life, how many refugees and displaced people have been created? No one really knows.

What is happening in Syria is untenable. Meeting after meeting takes place, negotiation after negotiation is held, and resolution after resolution is adopted while thunderous bombs continue. Human lives have been devastated and homes, markets, schools and hospitals destroyed, in total violation of international humanitarian law. Despite the laudable efforts of humanitarian organizations of goodwill, an entire people is dying and the economy and above the centuries-old sociocultural heritage of an entire country is collapsing. How much longer can this go on?

The cause that gathers us under one roof at the United Nations is peace, which is not only desirable but necessary. It is mandatory and it is achievable. The price of peace is never higher than the cost of war. It is certainly Senegal's hope that a negotiated solution to the Syrian crisis is still possible. We saw evidence of that recently with the first ceasefire agreement on which the Russians and the Americans were able to agree. Regrettably, it was quickly breached, but if both were to take the necessary measures and shoulder their share of responsibility in the tragedy, I believe that they would be able to assist the Security Council in discharging its mission.

In Africa, we say that when two elephants fight, the grass suffers. The Security Council has reached its limits. No resolution can be drafted because of the right of veto. That is why the Security Council must be reformed. Could a veto be vetoed, perhaps, when there is a risk of genocide or crimes against humanity? Should we allow the right of veto to prevent humankind from ending the situation unfolding right in front of us? We see the impact of the movement of Syrian refugees to Europe. Many democracies could crumble under the weight of extremism. We see its effects in North Africa — terrorism is taking place in Syria and Libya and has reached the Sahel and Somalia. Should we wait until the world collapses under the weight of the Syrian crisis to act? I believe that it is time for the Council to take up the tools it needs to discharge its mission and end the conflict.

Senegal supports the efforts of the International Syria Support Group and all efforts needed to achieve effective and lasting peace throughout Syria and to allow for the unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance. We also support the establishment of a joint command centre for information-sharing and improved cooperation to combat terrorism. I welcome Egypt's proposals, which could very much assist its neighbours in the quest for peaceful solutions. Senegal welcomes the adoption of a joint, consistent, global strategy to

ensure that the terrorists who are driven out of Syria are unable to settle elsewhere in North Africa, in particular, and in the Sahelo-Saharan region.

Similarly, peace must be made among all Syrian parties in good faith towards a political solution to the conflict. Such peace is possible because war cannot be the future of an entire people. I hope for momentum in the Russian-American dialogue because peace will depend on a serious agreement being reached between those two great countries. We should reflect on the wisdom of a great man of the twentieth century, John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Fifty-three years ago, in this very Organization, he himself delivered the following words, "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind" (*A/PV.1013, para. 40*). Let us make the right decisions.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr. Abe (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English text provided by the delegation*): Our agenda today, the situation in Syria, is an urgent one. This ongoing international crisis requires a show of solidarity from the Security Council. We discussed Syria at the Group of Seven (G-7) Ise-Shima Summit this year and confirmed the importance of cooperation among G-7 members. Today, I would like to reaffirm our commitment in the Security Council.

We deeply deplore the situation that the nationwide cessation of hostilities based on the agreement between the United States and Russia is in danger. The International Syria Support Group was convened yesterday and the commitment was reaffirmed that the international community as a whole will support the agreement. Japan took part in that commitment. The Security Council must strongly promote the transition to a political process in which violence is ceased and humanitarian access is improved under the leadership of Special Envoy, Mr. Staffan de Mistura.

The joint investigation of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons identified those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria last month. This month, it was reported that chlorine-based attacks were conducted in Syria. The use of chemical weapons is utterly unacceptable in any circumstances. The Security Council must unite in order to hold perpetrators to account and bring those responsible to justice. As a member of the Security Council and the International Syria Support Group, Japan calls on the international community and all relevant stakeholders to fully abide by the Security Council's Syria-related resolutions.

In collaboration with the United Nations and other international organizations, Japan has provided non-military assistance and aided in creating as conducive a climate as possible for the political settlement of the Syrian crisis. Japan has supported efforts to build societies that are resilient against violent extremism by combining urgent humanitarian assistance with development assistance for the people of Syria and neighbouring countries. That support has centred on three areas.

First, Japan has extended assistance to all Syrians inside and outside of Syria. Secondly, Japan has provided support to vocational training and capacity-building programmes for women. Thirdly, Japan has provided assistance to alleviate the burdens faced by neighbouring countries in support of regional stability. It is especially important to bolster efforts to build societies that are resilient against violent extremism. In collaboration with the United Nations, Japan has supported territories liberated from violent extremism in order to promote stabilization. We have provided assistance to people who are socially marginalized and have not received even basic assistance.

As one example, Japan has collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme to implement the Emergency Employment Project in northern Jordan, where the unemployment rate has risen amid a wave of Syrian refugees. That project has supported job-seeking and business ventures for more than 1,000 young people. Nadia, a Jordanian woman, recalled, "I cannot forget the moment when I heard over the phone that I had been accepted to participate in the project". Nadia, who has three children, acquired the necessary knowledge to start a business and decided to open a kitchen utensil store. We believe that promoting women's social participation and developing a sense of involvement among young people are effective means to create resilient and tolerant societies and to prevent violent extremism.

With that in mind, Japan provided more than $1.26 billion to Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries from 2011 to 2015. In addition, Japan is implementing $1.13 billion of assistance to Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries this year. Japan is focusing in particular on implementing humanitarian aid, including

the provision of food, water and vaccinations, as well as assistance for economic development and social stability, including education and vocational training in collaboration with the United Nations and other international organizations.

However, the success of Japan's efforts depends on how we resolve the current Syrian crisis. Japan reiterates its determination, as a member of the Security Council, to work on the matter in a responsible manner because, first of all, a ceasefire is absolutely important. Once again, Japan will continue to work on this issue.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Hamidi (Malaysia): I thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting and presiding over the Council today. Malaysia believes that this meeting is especially timely and important in the light of the most recent development in Syria.

I take this opportunity to place on record my delegation's appreciation for New Zealand's strong leadership, alongside Egypt and Spain, particularly on the Council's efforts to address the humanitarian dimension of the Syrian conflict.

My delegation wishes to underscore its deepest appreciation and respect for the unflagging efforts of the United Nations in spearheading the international response to the Syrian crisis. In this connection, I thank both the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for their presence and participation today.

Malaysia is horrified and outraged by the attack on the United Nations-backed humanitarian convoys near Aleppo on Monday night. We strongly condemn the killing of unarmed civilians and humanitarian workers in that incident as yet another flagrant violation of international law, which reflects the absolute disrespect, disregard and contempt that the parties to the conflict have for the values of humankind.

Malaysia stands in solidarity with other friends of Syria in helping to alleviate the situation of its citizens amid this grim reality. In this regard, we have taken certain steps, including making modest, direct financial and in-kind contributions to Syrians in need, especially those in the border areas. We have also committed to taking several thousand Syrians fleeing the violence in their homeland, and I am pleased to share with the Council the fact that this initiative has been implemented.

The bloody and protracted conflict in Syria continues to sorely test the Council's ability to unite around a common approach for a credible and sustainable political solution to the crisis. Since 2011, the conflict has metastasized, spawning a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions that we are all struggling to contain, as well as provided space and an enabling environment for the cancerous growth of terrorism, most notably the rise of Da'esh, whose heinous acts and barbaric atrocities have reverberated far across the globe.

Against that background, the Council must remain resolute and continue to strive for unity and coherence in both its purpose and action in order to effectively discharge its Charter-mandated responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. In noting the various formats pursued in the process of seeking to resolve the Syrian conflict, I wish to underscore that the Council can never be sidelined and has a central role to play.

At this critical stage, despite some highly publicized setbacks in recent days, the Russia-United States package of agreements reached on 9 September represents the latest concrete effort towards, first, halting the violence and subsequently laying the groundwork for a credible and inclusive political process on the future of Syria.

We have also listened very carefully to the views of the Secretary-General and Special Envoy De Mistura on a possible power-sharing agreement between the parties to the conflict. We understand that the primary aim of these proposals is to end the hostilities, an aim that we strongly support.

As a current member of the Council, Malaysia's support for the implementation of its decisions on Syria is unwavering, especially those related to the cessation of violence and on the humanitarian situation.

Particular attention must be given to the protection of children as the most vulnerable group in any violent conflict. We were shocked to the core by the bombing of a maternity hospital in Idlib, which sent babies crashing to the floor in their incubators. We winced at images of children gasping for their last breath after being attacked with chemical weapons; and we were heartbroken by the sight of 5-year-old Omran Daqneesh, covered in dust and blood, sitting quietly,

alone and in shock, waiting in an ambulance after he was pulled from the rubble of his family home; many others, sadly, did not make it out alive.

Despite the countless horrific incidents of children being bombed, gassed and starved, the parties to the conflict in Syria seem to have wilfully jettisoned all reason and humanity, unable to say "enough is enough" so as to prevent more casualties, especially of children. We strongly demand that the conflicting parties respect international humanitarian law, particularly in providing unfettered humanitarian access and in protecting civilians and civilian objects, including children, relief or rescue personnel, schools and hospitals.

While the 2012 Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) remains relevant, Malaysia is of the view that moving the political process forward should be guided by the provisions of resolution 2254 (2015), taken in parallel with the implementation of the 9 September Russia-United States arrangement. We call on all interested partners and stakeholders to support the way forward as outlined by Special Envoy De Mistura.

Finally, I wish to underscore that Malaysia remains committed to seeking accountability for the various violations and abuses committed in the course of the conflict in Syria. We stand ready to cooperate with all interested partners, and we will support initiatives towards this end.

I wish to also convey Malaysia's utmost appreciation and respect to the many United Nations system and other humanitarian actors and agencies, toiling untiringly in the field and bringing some measure of hope and dignity to a war-ravaged people.

We can never hope to repay such a debt; however, it behoves all of us to redouble our efforts to achieve a durable political solution, so that the guns will fall silent and that peace, reconciliation and rebuilding of the Syrian nation can soon commence.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Delcy Eloína Rodríguez Gómez, Minister of People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Ms. Rodríguez Gómez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today, as we celebrate the International Day of Peace, is the ideal moment to examine the situation in a sisterly country that is part of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, that is, the Syrian Arab Republic.

This year, 3 September, which was just a few days ago, marked exactly a year since the dissemination of an image that shocked the international community: that of the lifeless body of the child Aylan Kurdi, on a beach in Turkey. That image truly prodoundly touched the human conscience, embodying as it does the humanitarian tragedy that the country is living through: 300,000 deaths; 6.6 million internally displaced persons; 13.5 million people in situations of humanitarian emergency; and 4.8 million refugees. The international community, and we deeply regret having to say this, has become accustomed to such numbers as if they were a normal part of daily life. We have lost the humanitarian dimension in what is really happening in the situation in Syria. The question is how we got to this point. It was not due to happenstance or divine intervention. It was because of the interference of international Powers that have violated international law through violation of Syria's sovereignty, its independence and the fundamental purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and sought to overthrow a legitimate Government, ignoring the desire of the Syrian people.

We have not arrived at this point by chance. We have heard about the use of chemical weapons. We must seek the truth because, while the international community has many regrets, it has also been the victim of imperial lies. Or have we perhaps forgotten the case of Iraq, where supposed existence of weapons of mass destruction led to military intervention in that country in the Middle East. That was not done to provide happiness, progress or development but, rather, to sow violence, death and destruction. The only goal was to grab the natural resources and energy resources of that fraternal country, which is also a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The international community cannot continue to be subjected to lies sold by the centres of Power through the international media conglomerates. I have heard here that citizens are tired of their Governments. No, we citizens are not tired of our Governments. Citizens are tired of certain Powers attempting to govern the world. That is what we are tired of. We are tired of the lack of norms and regulations, because in our Governments we comply with the multilateral system of the United Nations and abide by international treaties.

Just a few days ago, on Saturday, 17 September, when we met in Margarita at the historic Summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, we painfully

witnessed with shock an attack by the United States against the army of a brotherly country, Syria. That incident facilitated the advance of terrorist groups on the ground. How many more such mistakes will we see? It is very easy to state afterwards that mistakes were made. But such mistakes cost hundreds of thousands and even millions of human lives. We cannot simply remain silent before such a situation when we are told that mistakes have been made. There are those who are responsible for the mistakes and we have called on the Security Council to take action.

When we see that terrorist groups are trying to take the place of a legitimate Governments and to disregard the will of the people, we ask ourselves, in this place, where we are in charge of the maintenance of international peace and security, who is supporting them, who provides weapons and who finances the logistical support for terrorists? Those are truths that cannot be hidden. Or must we wait another 10 years before the truth is known?

One cannot continue to lie to the world so shamelessly and immorally. Clearly, in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we see that our Constitution considers the development of peace not only as a founding principle, but a fundamental right. We advocate for the right of the Syrian people to peace and development and for safeguardng their right to sovereignty. In that regard, we would join any effort to promote a peaceful political solution, based above all on respect for the Syrian Arab Republic's State institutions and on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that brotherly country.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.

Mr. Nin Novoa (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to thank the New Zealand presidency for convening this informative, high-level meeting to address the challenges of one of the main threats to international peace and security, namely, the current conflict in Syria, on which we have focussed since the very beginning. Uruguay particularly appreciates this meeting because we are convinced that the Security Council can do much more to mobilize the necessary political will with a view to achieving negotiated long-term solutions for the Syrian people.

Every three months, the Council meets to analyse the situation in the Middle East. At each of those meetings, all Council members emphatically express the urgent need to find solutions to the crisis. Also at those meetings, my country has stressed the serious humanitarian crisis facing the Syrian people and the need to move towards sustainable political solutions. We have agreed on the need to take measures in that regard. However, we meet again today to discuss what more we can do and should do.

We are concerned that, despite the efforts made at the international level, we have not achieved effective solutions to respond to the current conflict. We have not been able to overcome the obstacles to achieving lasting peace, or to end the suffering of millions of people. After five years of conflict, we continue to witness the loss of thousands of innocent lives. We have seen violations of all human rights of the civilian population. We have observed the use of warfare tactics such as hunger. We have struggled to overcome existing obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian aid to those most in need. Worst of all, we have witnessed indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets, including hospitals and schools.

Those who have been able to flee are unable to return to their homes. Their lives have been destroyed, families have been separated and their futures erased. They do not understand economic, political or strategic interests. They want solutions, actions, measures and firm political commitments.

That is why we are here today: to shoulder the responsibility that has been assigned to the Security Council. The Syrian population needs an urgent response from every one of us meeting here. We must therefore renew our commitment, set aside our differences and commit to a negotiated solution that will make possible a way out of the current crisis. Dialogue requires that all stakeholders respect their obligations under international law, particularly international humanitarian law and international human rights law. It is imperative to respect the provisions of the Council's resolutions.

Just over four months ago, the Council adopted resolution 2286 (2016), on the protection of hospitals and humanitarian personnel in situations of armed conflict. However, despite the fact that the resolution was co-sponsored by more than 80 United Nations States Members, hospitals continue to be bombed. No mistake can justify such action while the most vulnerable continue to be attacked.

Now and forever, we condemn the increasing use of chemical weapons against the civilian population, which is one of the most flagrant violations of international humanitarian law, and we repudiate the use of barrel bombs that do untold harm to the local populace. Those who are responsible must be identified by the Joint Investigative Mechanism. In that context, I reiterate Uruguay's firmest condemnation of the activities of terrorist groups operating in the region. We are convinced that there can be no justification for such acts, be it political, ideological, philosophical, religious, ethnic, racial or of any other nature. Similarly, we are concerned about the growing destabilizing impact of these groups in the conflict in Syria, which adversely affect the ability to achieve sustainable solutions to the aforementioned conflict.

We therefore consider it essential that, together with the political efforts being exerted in the Syrian conflict, the commitment to the implementation of effective and efficient measures against the financing of terrorist groups be renewed, with a comprehensive and long-term approach. Similarly, greater efforts should be made with respect to arms trafficking, regulating trade and ensuring the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. This decision requires the commitment of all States of the international community, which we humbly request.

We must continue to support the work and efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Staffan de Mistura. It is essential to restore the dialogue between the parties so as to reach without further delay a political, peaceful and Syrian-led solution that takes nothing but the interests of the Syrian people into account. Uruguay stresses the importance for this process to enjoy the support of the United Nations and the key actors in the conflict.

In that regard, we are deeply concerned about the fragility of recent ceasefire agreements. We are convinced that without the strict compliance of all stakeholders, a long-term political solution that ensures peace for the Syrian people will not be possible. Similarly, the uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian assistance is essential, and guarantees for such effective delivery are linked directly to the aforementioned ceasefire. There can be no humanitarian action without a ceasefire. We must not forget that the commitment to peace and security in the region and with the Syrian people is now a shared commitment.

The shocking images that continuously bombard us with the horror of this conflict remind us of the primary role of the Organization and of what we should be doing. It is in our hands. We can and must do more.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development of France.

Mr. Ayrault (France) (*spoke in French*): While Syria has been mired in tragedy for five years, and while each passing day propels the country further into chaos and its people into horror, it is more urgent than ever to work together to seek to end the conflict. That is our collective responsibility. The peoples of the world are watching. They will judge us severely if we fail to uphold the mission that the Charter of United Nations entrusts to the Security Council.

An agreement was signed last week by the United States and Russia. France welcomed it as a response to an emergency — that of saving human lives. For five years, civilians have borne the heaviest toll of this appalling war. Aleppo, a martyr city, symbolizes the horror of this war. The fighting must stop, humanitarian assistance must be delivered, and a momentum for peace must be launched with a view to reaching a political solution that includes reconstruction and the return of refugees who have fled by the millions.

All of us around this table know how difficult that is, as recent developments have unfortunately demonstrated. Yet again, the logic of violence has prevailed; yet again, the truce has collapsed; yet again, the Syrian regime has stubbornly pursued its headlong military strategy, although the military solution is doomed. We are forced to wonder whether the unspoken goal may be, after all, the fall of Aleppo and the de facto partition and effective control of Syria.

This vicious cycle has lasted long enough. It has lasted too long. In this conflict, where there are more unknowns than knowns, one thing is certain — after five years of a war that has claimed more than 300,000 dead and displaced millions, it is obvious that nobody can win by force. There will be no winner, other than the terrorist organizations that will continue to benefit from the widespread chaos that will prevail. If there is one certainty about this conflict, it is that its outcome can only be political.

In the face of the Syrian tragedy and the risk of failure, the time for second thoughts, short-sighted

calculations, tactical considerations and double-talk is over, inside the Security Council and out. We must first ensure the sustainability of the cessation of hostilities. In that regard, the Russian-American agreement is for now, I repeat, the only proposal on the table. But we must be clear-sighted; the numerous violations on the ground are in their overwhelming majority the acts of the regime and its allies. The heinous bombing of a humanitarian convoy in Aleppo, which has been mentioned several times this morning, has outraged international public opinion. It is a sorry illustration of the spiral of violence. The constant bombings of medical facilities and personnel are yet another aspect. The full truth behind these tragedies and their sponsors must be revealed, as the Secretary-General noted earlier. Our common moral duty is to join forces to ensure respect for the cessation of hostilities. Our collective commitment must be to ensure the effective, just and lasting implementation of the truce.

I emphasize that effectiveness is critical if Syrians are to feel the concrete impact of the cessation of hostilities. Humanitarian assistance must therefore be delivered. It can longer be subject to the regime's haggling. All bombing of civilians and moderate opposition groups must stop. Strict monitoring is vital. Experience teaches us that the regime exploits truces, applied locally, to focus its military efforts on other fronts. Why, then, do we not require the regime to canton all its soldiers, since the effectiveness of the truce depends on that? I propose, on behalf of France, that the Security Council work practically to that end.

The second requirement is that of justice, which demands that no crime be ignored, even in exchange for a truce. It has been proved that the regime has used chemical weapons, as has Da'esh. The perpetrators of those crimes must be punished. There will be no lasting peace in Syria if there is impunity. It therefore up to the Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, to condemn those attacks and punish the perpetrators. It is a moral duty, but also an obligation of the international community, which has wanted to eliminate chemical weapons forever.

And the third necessity is that of sustainability. The ceasefire agreement must be sustainable, for it is essential for creating the conditions for a future peace. A new governance arrangement must open up political prospects and create a collective space. Certainly, one cannot generate new hope around a figure who divides Syrians and sows mostly death and destruction. Resolution 2254 (2015), which Mr. De Mistura evoked again a while ago, provides a road map for a political transition and a devolution of power.

The United States and Russia of course have special responsibility for the implementation of the agreement they negotiated: they co-chair the International Syria Support Group. But as I said at the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) meeting, as well as to Sergey Lavrov and John Kerry, and as I have said here before members, France is convinced that only collective mobilization will make it possible to achieve the goals that I just mentioned. Everyone must take up their responsibilities. It is true that this approach has its value, but it also has its limitations. France is therefore ready to take on its responsibility as part of the new credible and effective monitoring mechanism we are proposing. Such a mechanism must make possible a shared assessment of violations of the truce and the obstacles to humanitarian access, as well as to determine consequences. We must leave behind the approach of mutual accusations, which precipitated the failure of previous agreements and was not conducive to an atmosphere of confidence. There is too much mistrust — a feeling I also noted at the ISSG meeting. We must therefore create propitious conditions to move forward. I therefore make this proposal for a new monitoring mechanism. I have circulated here among all Council and ISSG members the non-paper we prepared for discussion.

Once an effective truce is in place and humanitarian access is assured, which is the priority, negotiations for a genuine political transition can, and must, resume. We know what the parameters are, namely, the 2012 Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and resolution 2254 (2015), which was mentioned frequently by previous speakers. The High Negotiations Committee has presented proposals and is ready to play a constructive role for a Syria that is open, democratic and respectful of its diversity. What have we seen from the regime if not propaganda and delaying tactics? But proposals for a negotiation? None to date. The burden of evidence is therefore with them and its allies.

Finally, what is at stake in Syria is also a major battle against terrorism. That fight has not ended, nor must it. It must continue, both against Da'esh and all other groups in Syria that espouse the same ideology and violence, including, again Da'esh, as well as Al-Qaida and the Al-Nusra Front. France again reiterates that that must include all non-jihadist armed

groups, which should distance themselves from those terrorist organizations — and fast.

France is playing its part in this common fight of the international community against terrorism alongside the coalition. We are acting militarily against Da'esh and are prepared to do the same against any terrorist group, which we must prevent from taking advantage of the truce to strengthen themselves and prosper. But nothing will be more useful in the fight against Da'esh than our collective mobilization to ensure that at long last Syria once again finds its way towards peace and stability. If we yield to impotence, fatalism and resigning ourselves, I think we will bear a heavy responsibility. The press are already saying that it is all over, definitively stating that we have failed and that there is not even a slight chance for a ceasefire to take. It is up to us here to demonstrate that that is not true and that there is still hope. We must show that we do not want to be complicit in the fall of Aleppo — which I again say is a martyred city — or in the martyrdom of the Syrian people. France will not resign itself to that. And I have heard statements here this morning that inspire me to hold out that hope.

What we need is a burst of will, a burst of responsibility and a burst of unity to end a conflict that has lasted far too long. That is the appeal I make before the Council today in the name of France.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Manuel García Margallo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain.

Mr. García Margallo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My statement will focus on previous views on the conflict, the humanitarian situation, remarks about terrorism, the political process and the role of the United Nations.

With regard to earlier perceptions, we all agree that, as with other conflicts in the Middle East, the roots of the conflict lie in the absence of political regimes capable of ensuring cohesion among societies that are intrinsically diverse. As a consequence, as the French Foreign Minister just said, partial or temporary solutions will not do. To the contrary, we need lasting and stable solutions that address all the problems. I also agree that there is no time to lose. At the moment we have two avenues before us. The first is a political framework to address the conflict, including the Security Council and the International Syria Support Group, and the second is a legal basis for resolving the problem, namely, resolution 2254 (2015), by which we are all bound. What we lack is the courage and political will to ensure compliance with our resolutions and sufficient imagination to envision a political process that brings about a definitive end to the conflict.

The second point I want to make has to do with the humanitarian dimension. I will not repeat the statistics of the terrible consequences of the conflict in Syria. We all know them. I will also not mention the consequences of the conflict on host countries, which are having to bear the enormous burden of refugees. We heard about that yesterday at a meeting we all attended. And nor will I refer to the consequences for Europe. But know that, in large part, the increase in populism and xenophobic movements is due to the impact of refugees in our countries. But, as I said, I do want to talk about the humanitarian situation, although I will not refer to the consequences of violations of international humanitarian laws, which is one of the main result of the conflict. We have spoken of attacks against civilians. We have talked about attacks against medical facilities. And we have referred to the use of prohibited weapons.

There are two consequences to all that. There can be no impunity for those who have committed such crimes.

Some time ago, Spain proposed establishing an international criminal court specializing in crimes of terrorism that would try crimes that the International Criminal Court and national courts do not have the authority to try. As our Malaysian colleague noted, Spain, along with New Zealand and Egypt, Spain has been a leader on humanitarian issues in the Security Council, since it is an area we consider particularly important.

With regard to terrorism, Spain has broad experience in both its domestic and international forms. In sharing my thoughts on this with the Council, I should point out that we are dealing with three levels of action. The first is pursuing action at the international level, that is, by doing away with the forums and movements that export terrorism to the rest of the world. That is being done by the international coalition of which Spain is an active member. At the national level, we must eliminate the flows of foreign fighters who come and go between our countries and Syria, as well as financial flows and arms trafficking. In Syria, at the domestic level, it is crucial that we separate the wheat from the chaff — that is, the

moderate opposition groups from those that are clearly terrorist. I am thinking in particular of Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front, as I think we can all agree. However, we must also convince the 20 groups that have not yet decided on one side or the other to make up their minds as to which side of the divide they are on, and we should then draw the appropriate conclusions.

Regarding the political process that I mentioned earlier, there can be no lasting peace without dialogue and reconciliation within Syrian society. I think we all agree that, to start with, there is no military solution. Neither side can win the war, and if there is no military solution we have to reach a political solution based on dialogue. It cannot be dialogue for its own sake, however; rather, it must be dialogue aimed at reaching an authentic national reconciliation — and believe me, Spaniards know something about that. But I believe some conditions are essential if that dialogue is to culminate in reconciliation.

All the parties to the conflict should understand that the new Syria will not be the precise Syria that they have fought or are fighting for, but it will be a Syria that is a common home for all stakeholders of goodwill who genuinely desire peace. To achieve that new Syria, various conditions must be met. The first is the return of exiles, without whose cooperation it will not be possible to build a new Syria. The second is to avoid dismantling institutions, so as to avoid the mistakes we made in Iraq and Libya. The third is to understand that the Syria we want is an integrated Syria, where the principle of territorial integrity is respected — we cannot accept or tolerate the possibility that the conflict will end with its partition — a plural Syria, because Syria is a plural society, and a democratic society that respects human rights.

To make that possible, and to launch a political process that can result in this new Syria, some preconditions are essential. The ceasefire must be guaranteed, and that is absolutely the responsibility of all us. Access must be ensured for humanitarian aid to the individuals, populations and communities that are suffering the most. And a political dialogue must be facilitated. The latter is the responsibility of the Security Council, the International Syria Support Group and in particular those countries that can exert more influence on the parties to the conflict, whichever they may be. While we can see that an endless war is developing in Syria, there are external actors that are taking advantage of the conflict when they are not actually fomenting it.

I would like to conclude with a quotation from the Spanish thinker Salvador de Madariaga — himself an international civil servant — who in 1951, when the Spanish Civil War was finally over, addressed both the internal and external opposition, speaking in this very Organization, with the following words:

> "Those of us who once chose liberty and lost their land and those who chose land and lost their liberty are reunited to light the way that will lead us together to both land and liberty."

Amen to that.

The President: I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Johnson (United Kingdom): I would like to say to Secretary Kerry that I do not think that the people of the world are remotely fooled by what is going on in Syria. They know that this is not just a civil war; it is a barbaric proxy war, a conflict that is being fed, nourished, armed, abetted, protracted and made more hideous by the actions and inactions of Governments represented in this Chamber. They are looking to us — grown-ups, people with families, people who know about the world, people with university degrees — to set aside our differences and any selfish sense of strategic national interest and to put the people of Syria first. That means recognizing that there can be no political process unless there is a genuine ceasefire, and that there can be no genuine ceasefire unless there is a genuine political agreement that we can have a transition away from the Al-Assad Government.

It is the Al-Assad Government that is responsible for the vast majority of the 400,000 deaths in Syria, and that continues to drop barrel bombs on its own citizens, including two incidents, documented by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, of the dropping of chlorine gas. How can we sit by and let burning, blistering, barbaric chlorine gas be dropped on innocent people? As for the monstrous bombing of aid convoys and medical facilities that we have seen just in the last day or so, as Mr. Kerry rightly said, there are only two possible culprits. I hope very much that the truth will soon emerge about what exactly happened.

However, more importantly, laying aside recrimination, I hope that we will learn that the court of international opinion will not continue to tolerate this slaughter. I think the world is looking to us to do more now than just mouth the empty platitudes of resolution 2254 (2015), but to actually put it into practical effect and get that peace process and those conversations going again in Geneva. I think there is scope to build on the vision for a future for Syria, as laid out by the negotiations committee, of an open, pluralistic, democratic Syria, with respect for all minorities. And there is space, as the President rightly said, to compromise, and there should not be too many red lines. But above all, we must use this moment — in particular, the general debate of the General Assembly — to keep whatever impetus is left for this precious forward momentum in the Kerry-Lavrov process. Once again, I pay tribute to both Mr. Kerry and Mr. Lavrov for their efforts to get this done and move it forward.

We can do it. The people here in this Chamber can do it. They can help to produce a ceasefire; they have proved that before. They can get talks going, and we can approach these issues in a spirit of compromise. But we cannot have that spirit of compromise, talks or ceasefire without the will — as Foreign Minister García Margallo rightly said in his statement — and the good will of the people in the Chamber. I believe that it is possible and that there is the scope for compromise. I think that it is pretty gloomy now. Let us face it. Sometimes, the hour is darkest before dawn.

What I really want everybody to think about today is this. If in a year's time we are here again in anger and there are still bombings, killings, slaughter and massacres going on in Syria, then I am afraid that the responsibility for that will lie overwhelmingly with the people broadly represented in this place and above all with the Al-Assad regime and its sponsors.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank New Zealand for having convened this high-level meeting in the Security Council, and I also appreciate the fact that you, Sir, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, have come to preside over this meeting.

Peace is the shared aspiration of people throughout the world. This very Chamber embodies the vision of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The Security Council shoulders the responsibility for international peace and security. Our world today is peaceful in general, but we have witnessed successive regional disturbances and local conflicts. Traditional and non-traditional security issues are intertwined, and international security is complex.

The turbulence in West Asia and North African fomented by the Syrian issue has been lingering for five years. That has brought suffering to the countries and peoples of the region. It has also had grave effects on international peace and security. Many innocent lives have been lost. Numerous homes have been destroyed. Endless conflicts have emerged and receded. All of this has taught us the following lessons.

First, a political solution remains the only way out. Responding to violence with violence will only feed hatred. The use of force will not end conflicts but fuel warfare. The stakeholders in the Middle East must pursue dialogue and negotiations to narrow differences, accommodate the interests of the various parties and seek the most lasting and sustainable solutions. The international community must pursue political settlement with resolve and patience, and provide sufficient time and space for such efforts.

Secondly, we must address both the symptoms and root causes. The tensions in the Middle East are complex. Many issues are intertwined and can be addressed only with a multi-pronged approach. Improving people's livelihoods, fostering a culture of tolerance and building harmony are fundamental to addressing the chaos in the Middle East. They are also the essential means of avoiding new turbulence. Countries should follow the path of development to maintain their own conditions. In that regard, there is no standard answer but only tailored solutions. We must respect the choices made by States on their own.

Thirdly, we must uphold multilateralism to resolve the issues in Syria and elsewhere in the Middle East. The people of the countries concerned should play the primary role, but the international community should also provide a helping hand. The United Nations and the Security Council must play their part as main channels while other forces should act in a just and fair manner, doing more to facilitate rather than undermine their efforts.

To address the issue of Syria, the relevant Security Council resolutions, especially resolution 2254 (2015), must be effectively implemented. We remember that,

in this very same Chamber, all members unanimously adopted the resolution, which has laid out the overall direction for resolving the Syrian issue and established the principle of a Syrian-owned and led political process. We believe that we need to pursue progress in parallel in terms of a ceasefire, political negotiations, humanitarian assistance and joint efforts aimed at fighting terrorism. We hope that this year might be a turning point with regard to the situation in Syria.

We welcome the fact that Russia and the United States of America have once again reached a ceasefire agreement on Syria. We appreciate the enormous efforts they have made to that end. Of course, we hope that this new agreement will entail new opportunities for the situation on the ground, but we see that its implementation is not going smoothly. China expresses its regret with regard to the air strike on Government forces and the ensuing casualties. We also find the recent attacks on the United Nations humanitarian convoy unacceptable. All parties should strengthen coordination and cooperation to avoid such occurrences and ensure the full and effective implementation of the hard-won ceasefire agreement. That will help foster the necessary conditions for peace talks and the easing of the humanitarian situation.

The conflicting parties in Syria should not fight for victory on the battlefield. They should resolve their disputes at the negotiation table. China calls for a timely resumption of the Geneva peace talks. We call upon all parties to follow the Syrian-owned and -led political process to arrive at arrangements that meet the interests of all parties. External forces should not use the conflict to pursue their selfish goals. They should contribute to peace. Faced by the grave humanitarian situation, various parties and factions in Syrian must open access to humanitarian aid to ensure its timely delivery. The international community should continue reach out and help the Syrian people in these difficult times and assist neighbouring countries in properly settling refugees.

China will also continue to carry out its own efforts in this respect. Yesterday and today, Premier Li Keqiang of China has laid out our positions on various occasions. He also announced our new humanitarian assistance programme for refugees and migrants.

Chaos in Syria has fuelled terrorism. We believe that we should firmly combat all terrorist forces, including the Islamic State. We should strengthen international cooperation in the fight against terrorism in the three areas of intelligence-sharing, stopping the use of social media for spreading extremist ideology, and cutting off the flow and financing channels of terrorists.

China is a sincere friend of all parties in the Middle East. We have no selfish interests in the region. The interests of the people of the Middle East are our interests. Their concerns are China's concerns. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China will continue to fulfil its responsibilities and play its due role in ensuring peace and security in the Middle East. I believe that through joint efforts we will turn sword into ploughshare and realize peace.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Manuel Domingos Augusto, Secretary of State for External Relations of the Republic of Angola.

Mr. Domingos Augusto (Angola): First of all, we wish to thank the delegation of New Zealand for organizing this meeting. I take this opportunity to congratulate New Zealand on the efforts that it has been making in its presidency of the Security Council to bridge the gaps between Council members on sensitive and contentious issues, such as the Syrian conflict. Today's meeting is an expression of such efforts.

At this critical juncture, it is vital that the entire international community diligently and constructively initiate efforts, taking into consideration the fact that the people of Syria continue to bear the appalling consequences of the terrible war. Unfortunately, political differences and strategic interests continue to obstruct the prospects for negotiations that might lead to the attainment of a settlement that would end the conflict and spare millions of Syrian civilians from violence, humanitarian catastrophe and an unprecedented refugee crisis.

We received with optimism the news of the recent agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Syria brokered by the Governments of the United States of America and the Russian Federation as a critical step towards restarting the political dialogue, improving the dire humanitarian situation and more effectively combating the terrorist scourge that has permeated the Middle East and beyond. The most heinous perpetrators of terrorist acts and violent extremism — Al-Qaida, the Taliban, the Al-Nusra Front, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, also known as Da'esh — will get stronger if protracted

conflicts, such as the one in Syria, where geopolitical interests take precedence over people's well-being, are not resolved.

For more than five years, we have witnessed the destruction of schools, medical services and other civilian infrastructure, such as electricity- and water-distribution facilities, and the erosion of the Syrian social fabric in general. Despite humanitarian agencies' efforts to provide assistance to those in need and the linkage between the provision of humanitarian assistance and the launching of a meaningful political process, and even though the official rhetoric on both sides has been one of de-escalation and the willingness to resume political negotiations, the reality is that military gains of strategic importance continue to take precedence over peace negotiations.

Against the backdrop of this reality, the civilian population, particularly the younger generation, which has been forced to flee, has become marginalized, disenchanted and frustrated and is fertile ground for an ideology of extremism and hate and an illusionary sense of purpose and belonging in the face of such deep social and political grievances. It is crucial that regional and international stakeholders preserve the political will that led to the ceasefire and that the understanding reached be sustained. The time has come for all relevant actors in the region to redouble their efforts to bring the parties back to the negotiating table and begin the slow and arduous process of ending hostilities. This will in turn allow for the free and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid and the re-establishment of a national dialogue for a political settlement of this irrational conflict, with the aim of putting an end to the suffering of the Syrian people. That should be our main priority.

In conclusion, we would like to acknowledge the personal commitments undertaken by the United States Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry, and the Russian Federation Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, in brokering the ceasefire agreement, as well as the tireless efforts of Special Envoy De Mistura to bridge the existing gaps between the belligerents and get the Syrian parties and regional and international stakeholders on the same track, in order to facilitate the resumption of a more fruitful round of negotiations. It is our profound wish that the members of the Security Council, the International Syria Support Group and other regional stakeholders recognize the long-term benefits of ending the conflict and exert the necessary pressure for the resumption of negotiations and for a more effective and united combat against the ever-expanding terrorist threat.

The cooperative work of those entities should be focused on drastically reducing the flow of arms into Syria, increasing the delivery of humanitarian aid, establishing as the main priority an end to the conflict and easing the plight of the innocent civilians trapped in this bloody war. Hopefully, this debate, together with our collective endeavours, will galvanize the international community towards making a more proactive effort. There is a renewed sense of urgency to end armed conflicts, as they are at the root of rising radicalism and extremist ideology in conflict zones and throughout the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First and foremost, I wish to inform the Security Council that, as we meet here today to discuss the situation in my country, thousands of Syrians, honest Americans and persons from other countries are demonstrating on 47th Street, outside the Conference Building, calling on members of the Council to stop their bombing of and interference in Syria as well as their support for terrorist groups. Similar demonstrations are also taking place in other American cities, including in the State of California.

This important meeting about my country, Syria, is being held at a critical time, as we are witnessing serious disruptions that run contrary to the promising signs of the past week. This is mainly due to the fact that the United States disavowed the agreement it had concluded with the Russian Federation in Geneva on 9 September. It is also due to the unwillingness to force the armed groups supported by the so-called international coalition to abide by the aforementioned Geneva agreement. One must point out that the term "international", used to describe this coalition, does not convey the reality. That is to say, the coalition was formed outside the realm of international legitimacy, without a Security Council resolution and without coordination with the stakeholder, namely, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. This coalition is reminiscent of other destructive coalitions to which many speakers today have referred, coalitions that have brought nothing but disaster to such countries as Iraq, Libya and Yemen.

When the United States Administration decided to intervene unilaterally in my country through air raids, American officials came to us to say that Washington would commit not to use American warplanes to target the Syrian Army or vital infrastructure. Rather, only the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) would be targeted. I received the personal assurances on that point from the Permanent Representative of the United States, who spoke on behalf of her Government. It was a message conveyed by her Government.

Two years after the establishment of the coalition and the beginning of the air raids, American officials have forgotten their promises and their commitments. American jets are bombing Syrian Army facilities and vital infrastructure and American soldiers are now present in Syrian territories. The American military aggression on eastern Syria, the Turkish military aggression on northern Syria and the Israeli military aggression on southern Syria mean, without a shadow of a doubt, that the proxy war has become a real war and a true aggression on my country.

My country welcomed the Russian-American statements on 9 September after both parties agreed to combat the terrorist organizations, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) and the Al-Nusra Front, regardless of their their names. That agreement was concluded with the knowledge and consent of the Syrian Government. However, the international community, represented by the Council, received a horrific shock before which it stood helpless, unable to issue a condemnation or express outrage at the very least. That shock was the unjustified, brutal aggression that was launched by American, British and Australian and Danish fighter jets against Syrian Arab Army targets. The units of our army are combating the ISIS terrorist organization in the mountainous area of Tharda, in the vicinity of Deir ez-Zor airport. Those units had been defending tens of thousands of Syrian civilians besieged by ISIS in Deir ez-Zor city.

That gruesome attack resulted in numerous casualties among the officers and soldiers of the Syrian Arab Army — 83 martyrs and over 100 wounded. The aggression, which lasted for an entire 50 minutes of air raids and was preceded by reconnaissance flights by drones over two days, paved the way for ISIS terrorists to enter the military site of the Syrian army that was targeted deliberately before the Syrian army was able to recapture it again. To add insult to injury, our soldiers and the wounded were victims of another air strike by drones while they were evacuating their positions in Tharda after it was targeted.

Before that deliberate and unacceptable aggression, my country had been focusing on the issue of disassociating terrorist groups, in line with the statement of the International Syria Support Group issued at a meeting in Vienna on 14 November 2015. That is to say, we wanted to determine those that are terrorist groups, those that are not and those that can be considered to be opposition groups. However, it appears that 10 months were not enough for some to solve this puzzling mystery. It appears that some suffered from an early bout of Alzheimer's disease while trying to solve this mystery.

Along the same lines, Damascus expected Washington to fulfil its commitments in this regard by putting an end to the policies and practices of certain well-known countries that sponsor and support terrorism politically, logistically, financially and ideologically through the media. We expected an end to the influx of terrorists, weapons and funding from countries neighbouring Syria through the borders and the use of terrorism as a tool for political blackmail.

American reconnaissance aircraft, surveillance satellites and intelligence services failed to distinguish between ISIS and those fighting ISIS. The so-called international coalition failed to do so. It is no stranger to such failure. For years the coalition failed to detect thousands of foreign fighters that came to Syria and Iraq from around the world, an issue that was dealt with, thankfully, by a speaker in the Council today. They failed to detect convoys of armed vehicles and thousands of ISIS terrorists who travelled from Iraq to Palmyra in a long journey of over 200 kilometres across the Syrian desert. They failed to detect thousands of lorries that steal and smuggle Syrian oil to Turkey in order to fund the attacks of ISIS. They also failed to cut off the funding of terrorist organizations, even though they know very well the origin and destination of every dollar that reaches ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front. The only success they were able to achieve was to fabricate false accusations, made-up incidents, politicized reports and edited videos about the suffering of Syrians to demonize the Syrian Government and its allies.

It is quite astonishing that the United States Secretary of State would use the testimony of a so-called eye witness who noticed planes over the humanitarian convoy that was attacked yesterday in northern Syria.

The testimony of that eye witness, who is a member of the so-called moderate armed opposition, the Syrian opposition, was sufficient to establish that the air bombing of this humanitarian convoy occurred and for Mr. Kerry to accuse both the Syrian and the Russian Governments. My question is, can one individual in a crowded area that is inhabited by thousands of people, can he, on his own, notice airplanes, while others, thousands who live in this area, did not see these air strikes? The issue of eye witnesses is a laughable one, especially when we are reminded that those who accuse the Syrian Government of using chemical weapons relied on a single eye witness account who saw orange smoke. That is what we were told by the Syrian opposition. No one was there — neither the Turkish army, nor the American army nor the terrorists who stole Syrian helicopters from where they were parked at the airport.

To refresh the memory of Council members, I want to recall the mistakes by American officials. It appears that the American side does not learn from its mistakes. Since the establishment of the so-called international coalition, American forces made several mistakes. It mistakenly bombed an elementary school for the visually impaired in the city of Raqqah and it mistakenly air-dropped assistance over Ayn Al-Arab city that included weapons and rockets that fell into the hands of ISIS terrorists. It mistakenly killed Syrian civilians near the city of Raqqah, while claiming to target a weapons factory for ISIS. The gravest mistake was subsequently committed by a French and American forces when a joint air raid resulted in the death of over 200 civilians near Aleppo in the town of Manbij. One Council member deplored the situation in Aleppo just a few minutes ago. We note that 200 civilians were killed near that very city in a joint air raid carried out by the international coalition.

The latest wave of false accusations levelled at my Government included the allegation that we targeted a humanitarian convoy outside of Aleppo. Such accusations are part of a filthy propaganda war that was launched by well-known parties to exploit the suffering of the Syrian people for the sole purposes of scoring cheap points in the press, employing political blackmail and upholding their agendas with no regard for the heavy toll paid by the Syrian people whenever those same parties reject any solution that is not in line with their agendas. thereby prolonging the crisis.

My country, Syria, has warned of the attempts of certain regional parties to torpedo the American-Russian agreement ever since it was announced and before it entered into force. I want to draw attention to the heinous Israeli attacks on Syrian territory in recent weeks, which intensified once the American-Russian agreement to combat the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist organizations, such as the Al-Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade, was announced. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations remains suspiciously silent although we have sent many letters to the Council about the Israeli violations and the treatment of terrorists in Israeli hospitals.

I also wish to draw attention to the illegitimate Turkish military operations within Syrian territory, launched under the pretext of combatting Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) without prior coordination with the Syrian Government and the Russian operations command, which is a crime of aggression according to the Charter of the United Nations and the Council's provisional rules of procedure. It is a violation of Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. That is in line with remarks made by Turkish officials indicating that their Government wanted to deliver humanitarian assistance to the city of Aleppo without coordination with the Syrian Government or the United Nations.

My country is ready to resume intra-Syrian dialogue without preconditions and according to the decisions and foundations that launched this dialogue in order to reach a political solution decided by Syrians and Syrians alone, without foreign intervention or interference, so that Syrians can decide their future and their options through their own leaders in a manner that would ensure Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Syria will not become another Libya or Iraq — we will never allow it.

In that regard, we reaffirm that the success of any political process in Syria will require engagement, cooperation and full coordination with the Syrian Government as the main partner in any related domain. No committee, meeting or conference organized to resolve the crisis can succeed while some international parties seek, willingly or unwillingly, to exclude or marginalize the Syrian Government, cast doubt on its cooperation with the United Nations or undermine the success it has achieved in promoting and upholding national reconciliation based on the voluntary disarmament of foreign fighters and accompanied by the normalization of their status, the issuance of

pardons and their departure to other areas. That, in turn, will allow normal life to resume to in the areas they vacate and State institutions to restore the services they once provided.

I have a final question. Can we allow hundreds of armed groups and tens of thousands of terrorists to continue their terrorist attacks against my Government, my army and Syria's infrastructure, as they have done for over five and a half years? Can they continue without external support? That is a legitimate question, and I believe it should be acknowledged. We should not be misled into believing that the situation in Syria is a civil war.

The President: The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): As Secretary Kerry quoted earlier in this session, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynahan had said my colleagues are entitled to their own opinions but not to their own facts. Let us just keep in mind the facts of who is prolonging the suffering of the Syrian people. The last speaker's statement was so full of untruths that I feel no need to say anything further.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Turkey, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representative of Turkey to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I call on the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Begeç (Turkey): I have asked for the floor to reply to the statement made by the representative of Syria.

The Turkish position on the political, security and humanitarian aspects of the Syrian conflict were shared yesterday with the United Nations membership at the highest political level. I have nothing to add on that score, yet I wish to emphasize our dismay with certain parts of the statement delivered by the representative of the regime. The statement contained distorted facts and baseless accusations, including some levelled at Turkey. We reject them in their entirety.

This meeting, on the other hand, was instrumental in facilitating the exchange of views at the political level with regard to matters of mutual interest and importance concerning Syria. However, the utility of the meeting could have been considerably enhanced should the voice of the genuine representative of the people Syria, from the High Negotiations Committee, be heard as well. We are confident that such a day will come soon. We are equally confident that, eventually, those responsible for the destruction of Syria and the suffering of the Syrian people will be held accountable for the crimes they have committed. Until then, Turkey will stand by the democratic expressions of the Syrian people.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7775

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7775th meeting

Thursday, 22 September 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. McCully/Mr. Van Bohemen	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	France	Ms. Royal
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Aman
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin/Mr. Zagaynov
	Senegal	Mr. Ndiaye
	Spain	Mr. Ybañez
	Ukraine	Mr. Klimkin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnson
	United States of America	Mr. Johnson
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Aviation security

Letter dated 16 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/791)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Aviation security

Letter dated 16 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the SecretaryGeneral (S/2016/791)

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/791, which contains the text of a letter dated 16 September 2016 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Ms. Fang Liu.

Ms. Fang Liu (*spoke in Chinese*): I am pleased and honoured to have been invited by the President of the Security Council to attend today's meeting.

(*spoke in English*)

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Gerard van Bohemen of New Zealand, for inviting the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to address the Council on international civil aviation security issues, and to New Zealand's Foreign Minister, The Honourable Murray McCully, for presiding over this meeting.

ICAO has been contributing to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy since 2006, as well as to the relevant Security Council resolutions. In particular, I would highlight resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014). ICAO is one of the 38 entities of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), which is mandated to strengthen the coordination and coherence of counter-terrorism efforts in the United Nations system. We enjoy productive collaboration with all Security Council bodies, in particular the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

ICAO was established in 1944 upon the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation in Chicago. We work with 191 Member States and industry partners to adopt international civil aviation standards and recommended practices and policies in support of a safe, efficient, secure, economically sustainable and environmentally responsible civil aviation sector. The over 12,000 standards and recommended practices and policies are contained in 19 annexes to the Convention and used by ICAO member States as benchmarks to ensure that local civil aviation operations and regulations conform to global norms. In turn, these harmonized national air transport regulations help States, airlines, airports and others to cooperate in managing over 100,000 daily flights. This currently permits 3.5 billion passengers per year — representing some 10 million travellers each day, and one-third of the world's trade by value by air — to reach their global destinations safely, securely and efficiently. It is important to stress that the worldwide air transport network will double its volume of flights and passengers by 2030.

ICAO also protects civil aviation through the adoption of treaties. Among 19 United Nations counter-terrorism treaties, eight were adopted by ICAO, including most recently the Beijing Convention of 2010 and Montreal Protocol of 2014. In addition to its standards-setting role, ICAO audits States' civil aviation oversight capabilities in the areas of safety

and security, and coordinates targeted assistance and capacity-building, utilizing these monitoring results.

Technical assistance is a major component of the ICAO No Country Left Behind initiative, which focuses on assisting all States on prioritized needs to improve implementation under all ICAO strategic objectives. The primary objective of aviation security assistance is to support Member States in resolving significant security concerns identified through the ICAO Aviation Security Audit Programme, and to assist them in implementing security standards and the ICAO Traveller Identification Programme Strategy.

ICAO established in 2015 a regional aviation security and facilitation plan for Africa, but importantly, a great deal more is needed in terms of commitments and cooperation on the part of States and other international organizations if these and other technical assistance efforts are to fully meet their objectives. ICAO is also keenly aware of the critical links between sustainable socioeconomic development for States and safe, secure air transport operations, as international aviation contributes roughly 3.5 per cent to the world gross domestic product. While we strive with our member States towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that role is becoming more important than ever.

Aviation security — or, more precisely, the prevention of acts of unlawful interference against civil aviation — is one of ICAO's highest priorities. I mentioned earlier that ICAO's standards are set out in 19 annexes to the Chicago Convention. Annex 17 is specifically focused on aviation security. They cover a comprehensive range of measures, from national organizational arrangements and allocation of responsibilities to threat and risk assessments, baggage and cargo security, physical security at airports and incident response to international cooperation, among many other matters.

The high-profile landside airport attacks in Brussels and Istanbul earlier this year were a tragic reminder of the enormous challenges faced in securing public areas, the inseparability of aviation security and national security and of the significant socioeconomic consequences of terrorism. But they also remind us of the resilience and responsiveness of the global civil aviation network. Subsequent to those attacks, ICAO rapidly developed new amendments to annex 17 aimed at enhancing landside security at airport facilities. It is anticipated that the ICAO Council will adopt them in November.

In terms of the outlook for international civil aviation security, at present we consider it to be both promising and challenging. I am pleased to inform the Council that ICAO's Universal Security Audit Programme continues to record that levels of effective implementation of aviation security standards are steadily improving, at both the global and regional levels. Intensive collaboration by States, under ICAO's leadership, is also permitting us to refine all the relevant standards, recommended practices and best-practice guidance based on risk management.

Another very positive development we have taken note of is the unprecedented level of multilateral cooperation to support aviation security enhancement initiatives. In addition to the ICAO African regional security plan, the States of the Middle East region recently adopted the Riyadh Declaration, which outlines the need to improve aviation security in that region. But at the same time, the threat and risk situation remains complex and rapidly evolving, and so too must the security measures to address them.

Threats posed by small weapons carried by passengers, improvised explosive devices concealed in baggage and cargo, and man-portable air defence systems continue to require attention. As well, areas of new or renewed concern, such as landside security, cybersecurity, remotely piloted aircraft systems and insider threats require urgent attention. And while the overall effective implementation of ICAO's global standards is improving, there remains much room for progress. That is especially the case in States that lack national capacity or may otherwise be characterized by under-developed civil aviation security systems and programmes.

A cornerstone of ICAO's aviation security standards is the obligation of each State to designate and specify to ICAO an appropriate authority within its Administration. Those authorities are responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of the national civil aviation security programme. Those national civil aviation security focal points coordinate the direct involvement of national police, intelligence, customs, immigration, justice, foreign affairs, finance, military and other agencies to ensure a cohesive, whole-of-government national civil aviation security programme. They must also coordinate the involvement

of airline and airport operators and air-traffic service providers within that broad national framework. In other words, aviation security at the national level must engage a large number of entities, and each must contribute in a manner consistent with their respective mandates and responsibilities. The same holds true at the international level. But the required coordination can be complex and challenging at times, mainly due to variation among State coordination mechanisms and their resulting impacts on the global framework.

States are therefore called upon to help ensure that all of their relevant domestic entities work closely and effectively. To help drive the needed national focus on global harmonization, ICAO therefore coordinates closely with its member States, the CTED, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL and other members of the CTITF, regional aviation and security organizations and many others to enhance civil aviation security. Throughout those efforts, a recurring theme is securing and mobilizing States' political will, as well as enhancing national capacities.

The Security Council's focus will serve to heighten the efforts by the global community on aviation security, encourage intensified political engagement by the States to effectively implement ICAO's security standards and to support ICAO's technical assistance activities to the States in need. For the coming 2017-2019 triennium of the ICAO work programme, the centrepiece in the field of aviation security will be the development of a new global aviation security plan. Among the goals envisaged for the plan are greater technical assistance to States to build their capacity and achieve higher levels of effective implementation of annex 17 standards on aviation security, accelerate the development of human resources in aviation security, process and technology innovation to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of security measures and greater use of many aviation disciplines to improve security.

The global plan will establish and align targets and objectives tailored to States' needs, together with an effective mechanism for monitoring global progress. Under that new ICAO global aviation security plan, States, regions, industry operators and other stakeholders will be unified through a strategic framework that offers clarity on all priorities for aviation security enhancement. It will establish individual, bilateral and multilateral means to address those priorities, time frames for achieving results and the consequences to be expected when commitments are not delivered. That will provide ICAO with invaluable support in achieving its aviation security objectives and in effectively contributing to the Security Council's resoluitons and the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The President: I thank Ms. Fang Liu for her briefing.

Members of the Council have before them document A/2016/797, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay.

The Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, and the New Zealand presidency of the Council for the commendable way in which the proceedings have been conducted during September. I should also like to extend my appreciation to Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her valuable briefing.

The timing of the submission of the draft resolution before us is questionable, coming as it does just a few days before the triennial 39th session of the ICAO Assembly, which takes place in the last week of this month. The Assembly gathers all ICAO members to address all aspects related to civil aviation and aviation safety and security.

The introduction of today's draft resolution suggests a desire to meddle in ICAO's business in order to have the draft resolution adopted before that session. However, as agreed by the members of the Council, the goal of the draft resolution is to raise awareness within the international community about the gravity of the situation and the threats posed to civil aviation security, and to recall the incidents that have taken place since 2011. The threat is growing and aims to

influence national economies and relations among States. We must recall the gravity of the threat in order to promote cooperation among countries, provide the technical assistance needed, respect the sovereignty of countries and emphasize the role of ICAO as the global body in charge of such issues.

In view of its awareness of the importance of countering the terrorist threat and of protecting its citizens and tourists, Egypt continues to work closely with all countries and with ICAO. A recent review of aviation practices and procedures in Egyptian airports took place, in line with the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, and it is my pleasure to inform the Council that the ICAO audit team has given Egypt a positive assessment for its application of standard security procedures. The Egyptian authorities received a formal letter from ICAO in August, indicating the progress made by Egypt in the field of aviation security. We hope that other countries are at the same level.

We believe that the threat to civil aviation requires a collective effort to counter terrorism in a comprehensive manner by addressing the root causes that lead to terrorism within countries and by countering it in all its forms. If we are serious, we ought to engage in intensive cooperation and stop financing terrorism and providing safe haven to terrorists. We should also halt all attempts to use social media to spread messages of hatred and terrorist propaganda.

We must equip and assist countries in fighting terrorism in the required manner. We should also keep pace with the fast-changing attitudes and resources of terrorist groups, and adopt uniform measures and standards for countries that have been victimized by terrorism, which seeks to destroy their economies. We should not treat victims differently depending on their origins, but sympathize with all victims of terrorism. It is our ethical and political duty to treat everyone equally.

Lastly, we reaffirm Egypt's commitment to countering the scourge of terrorism on the basis of cooperation, openness and transparency. We will work to offer practical responses to the threat to the field of civil aviation security.

The President: I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2309 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to the other members of the Security Council.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Johnson (United Kingdom): I am most grateful to Ms. Fang Liu for her comprehensive briefing on behalf of the International Civil Aviation Organization. The United Kingdom wholeheartedly welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2309 (2016) thanks to the strong and united action of the Council. This is the first resolution ever to focus on the threat posed by terrorists to civil aviation, and it demonstrates our joint resolve to protect our citizens from an escalating danger. We have come a long way since the first scheduled commercial flight took off from Florida over 100 years ago. Today, over three billion passengers reach their destinations by air every year, and it is those lives that we are acting to protect today.

We only have to remember some of the recent tragedies to see the urgency of our task. The attacks on airports in Brussels and Istanbul, the destruction of the Russian Metrojet aircraft over Sinai last year and the explosion on board a Dallo Airlines flight from Mogadishu in February. All of those outrages posed a serious threat to international peace and security. All were stark reminders of how civil aviation faces an evolving danger from terrorists, who probe relentlessly for chinks in our collective armour. And there is one reality that none of us here can escape — we all depend on each other to provide a secure aviation environment. No country alone can safeguard what is by its very nature a global activity. That is why action here in the Security Council at the global level is so important.

By adopting the resolution today, the Security Council has delivered a resounding call to action for the entire international community. The resolution provides

for specific arrangements to be consistently applied. It also makes clear that precautions should be adapted in response to the changing tactics of the terrorists. The resolution encourages all countries to observe the security standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization. And we recognize that, if all nations are to meet this challenge, assistance will often be required. Targeted capacity development, training and other technical help will all be needed. I believe that such assistance should be provided with the full knowledge that protecting civil aviation represents a vital objective for all of us.

In conclusion, over the past two years the Security Council has taken a series of steps to counter the terrorist threat. Just as the danger has evolved, so has our response. We have sought to counter the emergence of Daesh. We have taken steps against the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. We have tried to block, or otherwise disrupt, the many channels of terrorist financing. The resolution represents another significant step forward in that common struggle. It provides a comprehensive approach to safeguarding civil aviation from terrorism, and it shows the determination of the entire international community to keep our citizens safe.

The United Kingdom looks forward to the full implementation of the resolution after this Council's unanimous show of support. Doing so will involve working both nationally and internationally with our partners. We also welcome the Council's intention to remain seized of this vital matter. The terrorists will not relent in their efforts to attack civil aviation, so we must never cease to persevere together to thwart their evil desires. Air travel is one of the greatest liberators that the human race has ever known, and the resolution will help us to continue to enjoy that freedom in safety.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security of the United States of America.

Mr. Johnson (United States of America): First, we express our appreciation to the United Kingdom and Secretary Johnson of the United Kingdom for bringing attention to this important issue on aviation security. I thank Secretary Johnson for his leadership on the issue. I also wish to commend the work of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and its Secretary General, Ms. Liu, on matters of aviation security. We are therefore glad that we are having this meeting, and we welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2309 (2016).

I regard aviation security today as an urgent matter. The resolution that we just adopted refers to recent terrorist attacks on civil aviation as a matter of grave concern. We agree with that characterization. For us in the United States, the defining moment for aviation security was 11 September 2001. A whole new Government agency dedicated to transportation security, our Transportation Security Administration (TSA), was created as a result. Today in the United States, the TSA is the agency of our Government that interacts most with the public on a daily basis. The reality is that today there is a continuing international threat to aviation security, including the terrorist threat. Recent attacks have demonstrated that the terrorist threat to aviation security and airport security are as serious as ever. As noted in the resolution, terrorist organizations continue to regard civil aviation as an attractive target for attacks. That is fully consistent with our own Government's assessment. Terrorist organizations continue to seek to exploit perceived gaps in our aviation security.

The good news is that in recent years, the international community has taken significant steps to strengthen aviation security and restore public confidence in aviation. There is still more to do. In the United States, the TSA, led by Administrator Peter Neffenger, has rededicated itself to its aviation security mission. Our airlines have supported that effort. Two years ago, we enhanced aviation security measures at international airports for flights bound to the United States. I am pleased that other nations have adopted similar enhancements.

Since last year following the crash of Metrojet Flight 9268, we have focused on enhanced security around passengers, luggage, cargo and other items brought on flights bound for the United States. We are actively researching and investing in new aviation security technology to track current threats. Our Congress has also authorized us to donate aviation security equipment to other countries.

After years during which we reduced the number of TSA officers, we have reversed that trend and are hiring more. We have converted large numbers of part-time TSA employees to full-time. We are adding more bomb-sniffing dogs to the aviation security mission. We have embarked upon a programme called TSA Precheck to

encourage passengers to submit to a background check in advance of their flight.

Earlier this year, despite increased air travel volume in the United States and longer lines at airport screening checkpoints, we refused to shortcut aviation security. We are seeking more agreements with other nations to accept air marshals on commercial flights to and from the United States. We are actively seeking more preclearance arrangements with Governments around the world, under which our customs officers are positioned overseas to screen passengers before they board flights to the United States.

We encourage other nations to rededicate themselves to the matter of aviation security. As Secretary Johnson noted, we all depend on each other on this issue. We encourage increased information-sharing on aviation security best practices among nations and continued investments by other nations in aviation security technology. Through ICAO, let us continue to standardize aviation security practices.

The United States of America strongly supports full implementation of the resolution that we have just adopted, and we encourage other nations to do so as well. The resolution provides an important opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to aviation security and advance global standards so as to address the evolving terrorist threat. Resolution 2309 (2016) sends a clear message, namely, security for international flights is an issue of concern for the Security Council. The resolution calls on all States to work with the established United Nations structures to develop more effective international standards for aviation security. The resolution calls on States to urgently address any gaps or vulnerabilities and to work vigorously and swiftly to address States' concerns about threats to international flights. I note in particular the provision in the resolution that calls upon States to ensure that

> "such measures take into account the potential role of those with privileged access to areas, knowledge or information that may assist terrorists in planning or conducting attacks" (*resolution 2309 (2016) para. 6 (c)*)

We will continue to work with the United Nations, our international partners and ICAO to strengthen standards that keep the global aviation system safe and secure.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Ségolène Royal, Minister of Environment, Energy and Marine Affairs of France, responsible for International Climate Relations and President of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Ms. Royal (France) (*spoke in French*): As the Security Council is aware, France has yet again violently and most painfully been struck by terrorist attacks. For that reason, I wish to thank the New Zealand presidency and the United Kingdom for organizing this ministerial meeting of the Council dedicated to aviation security. My ministerial responsibilities include oversight of land, rail and air transport modes.

I would like to thank the Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization for her very enlightening statement regarding the vulnerability of civil aviation and possible avenues for improvement. I would like to commend the numerous efforts she mentioned in her briefing by the organization in the area of aviation security. I assure her of France's continued support in that work.

The targeting of civil aviation by terrorists began in Entebbe in 1976, and there have been various other deadly attacks against civil aviation over the past few decades, claiming thousands of lives. Despite considerable strengthening of security measures, this threat remains present and topical, as Mr. Boris Johnson so rightly said, reiterated by Mr. Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security. Da'esh claimed the attack downing Metrojet Flight 9268 in the Sinai on 31 October, which claimed 224 lives. In Somalia, Al-Shabaab has claimed the attack that struck Daalio Airlines on 2 February. What has changed in these attacks is both the intensity and global nature of the threat, as well as the methods used by terrorists. This is why it is extremely important that the international community continue to mobilize itself against this scourge and that it shows greater solidarity. I welcome the unanimous vote that has just taken place because, as the Secretary General rightly said, , we are all linked to one another: we leave one place and arrive in another. As such, there is clear international solidarity. This is why it is so important for us to be able to detect weak links, which are all chinks in our collective armour. In the past, the Group of Seven (G-7) mobilized itself by granting pride of place to this topic in the action plan adopted at G-7 Summit in Ise-Shima in May. We will

have to ensure that commitments undertaken at the Summit are effectively implemented.

I will conclude by underlining two important issues.

First, as the Secretary General stated, it is important that States implement the standards set out in annex 17 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, to which they have subscribed, by ratifying the text, but also that they move beyond them, without hesitation, when required.

Secondly, it is very important to lend assistance to States that request it to ensure that they are able to upgrade their airport infrastructure and bring them in line with international norms. Such States must make the necessary efforts to ensure that the air routes linking them to the rest of the world remain reliable and sustainable, which is also in the interests of their economic development. That is why the mobilization of all the expertise of a State's administration responsible for aviation security must remain unfailing.

I would also like to mention security in airports, to which Ms. Fang Liu also referred, specifically the link between national and international security. Very recently in France there was an attack on a European Thalys train. The attack fortunately claimed no victims, thanks to the courage of a number of individuals on the train, some of whom were American, who were able to incapacitate the terrorists. Following that attack we installed a number of detector gates in stations and, in the same vein, we are currently looking at the possibility of placing security checkpoints at the entrances of airports, not only when one wishes to board the plane but also when one enters the airport itself. Moveable gates have also been deployed, as well as a number of patrol dogs, as was just mentioned by the Secretary of Homeland Security of the United States.

We have to bear in mind the necessity to exchange best practices in terms of new security technologies, namely, moveable gates, which are much more difficult to identify and are extremely effective. For the fact is that there is a democratization of air transport taking place, with the costs of flying falling, leading to a growing number of travellers. Especially following the tragedy in Nice, one can imagine the awful tragedy that could strike if there were an attack during the holiday period, with airports full of families with children. Reinforcing detector gates in airports is therefore something I believe to be essential. As the minister responsible for safeguarding air transport, this is one of my concerns when I think of the possible damage that could be caused from attacks launched where there are large numbers of people. An example of this is in airports during the holiday period where there are a great many people and a great many families.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese abroad of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Ndiaye (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure for me to see all Security Council Members here at this public debate on a clearly important and relevant topic. Terrorist attacks on civil aviation have happened with alarming frequency in recent years. They pose yet another threat to international peace and security.

The Senegalese delegation also wishes to extend its gratitude to the United Kingdom, sponsor of this initiative, which gives us an opportunity to begin considering the ways and means to effectively rise to the new challenges civil aviation faces. That is why we voted in favour of and co-sponsored resolution 2309 (2016), which the Council has just adopted. This is yet another important step in the right direction.

In accordance with the provisions of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), every State has a responsibility to guarantee the effective implementation of all security-related measures to protect civil aviation against unlawful acts. For several years, Senegal has undertaken a vast programme to bolster its civil aviation security in both its territory and in its air space. The policy has enabled the adoption by the National Assembly of my country of a new civil aviation code through its law 2015/10, adopted on 4 May 2015.

Senegal has also set up a number of aviation rules and regulations to improve the implementation of security measures and procedures. This regulatory framework was significantlhy updated at the national level within the framework of the implementation of the provisions of annex 17 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation and of the related Universal Security Audit Programme. Senegal has also created a platform to exchange sensitive information with other States in order to affectively face the rise in new threats, attacks and unlawful acts using aircraft and airports. Pursuant to decree 2015/1969 of 21 September 2015, Senegal has

set up a monitoring system for civil aviation security, based on ICAO's provisions. That will ensure the security of air transport in our territory for the setting up of a national civil aviation security programmes. The national civil aviation security programme and its annexes cover everything within the framework of civil aviation security. This applies to security measures for domestic flights, threat assessment, airport-safety programmes, operator-safety programmes, personnel selection and background checks, training and performance standards, screening-agent satisfaction, quality-management programmes and cooperation among States.

Senegal has also ratified the relevant provisions of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) related to air transport, in particular Regulation 10 (2013), on civil-aviation security, and Decision 11 (2013), dated 26 September 2013, on the implementation of safety practices and procedures within the member States of WAEMU. These provisions are aimed at creating a set of rules for preserving civil-aviation security in the WAEMU space, with regular updates based on the evolution of risks and threats as well as on technological progress. Each member of WAEMU reserves the right to apply more stringent measures to meet a particular requirement following the results of a threat analysis. Senegal supports the idea of improved cooperation among ICAO, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the Counter-Terrorism Committee through its Executive Directorate.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes and looks forward to the organization of the upcoming special meeting on threats to civil aviation and awaits with great interest the briefing on the meeting's results, which will be presented to the Security Council in 12 months.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Dato Sri Anifah Aman, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Aman (Malaysia): First of all, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, as well as the entire delegation of New Zealand, on so ably steering the Security Council's proceedings and work this month. I am pleased to participate in this very important and timely meeting. We hope it will make a meaningful contribution towards improving the state of global aviation security. Accordingly, I thank Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Ms. Fang Liu, for her insightful briefing.

The global aviation industry depends on a vast network that growing ever-more important everyday. The International Air Transport Association estimates that there are over 5,000 aircraft flying at any given time, carrying over 8 million people, while transporting 140,000 tonnes of cargo daily. Moreover, the aviation industry supports over 57 million jobs and generates $2.2 trillion in economic activity. The global economic benefits and significance to human activity today are enormous. As such, the global aviation industry must be protected with measures designed to provide safety and security for its passengers.

Malaysia shares the view that the global aviation network is an attractive target for international terrorism. The sharp increase in attempts to disrupt and threaten civil aviation over the past few years is proof of this view. The cold and calculating logic of terrorists was obvious in the attacks against the Brussels International Airport and Istanbul Atatürk Airport earlier this year. When such attacks are successful, the consequences are devastating in terms of both lives lost and undermined public confidence. Taken together, both could bring about even broader negative consequences. With two back-to-back aviation tragedies, Malaysia is acutely aware of the challenges associated with addressing negative public perceptions and loss of public confidence.

Against such a background, my delegation concurs that the threats posed to aviation security by terrorism constitute threats to international peace and security. It is therefore right for the Council to be seized of this issue. In this regard, I wish to thank the United Kingdom for leading the Council to adopt resolution 2309 (2016) this morning. Malaysia is pleased to support and co-sponsor the resolution, as it seeks to establish a better and stronger linkage between the Council's ongoing counter-terrorism work with ICAO's norms- and standards-setting work.

By enabling such linkages between ICAO and the Security Council, especially in the Council's subsidiary bodies, including the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, we are hopeful that such cooperation and collaboration would over time result in tangible improvements in global aviation security in all its aspects. At the same time, my delegation believes that resolution 2309 (2016) could also inform discussions within the ICAO General Assembly, scheduled to begin

early next week, on possible updates to the Global Aviation Safety Plan.

In the span of just four months, Malaysia suffered not one but two civil-aviation disasters, namely, the tragedies of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH-370 and MH-17. These tragedies continue to hang heavy on our hearts as they do on the hearts of the families and loved ones of the victims. These two civil aviation tragedies — while not ostensibly linked to terrorism — do offer some instructive lessons relevant to the aims and objectives of resolution 2309 (2016). In that regard, with a view to sharing Malaysia's experience, I wish to make two key observations.

First, with respect to the civil-aviation authorities' initial instinct or reflex in both cases to investigate and determine whether the air disasters were caused by terrorism or other factors, the immediate provision of expertise and assistance from both States and international organizations, including the ICAO, to determine probable causes, were, in our view, crucial to dispelling the notion that either MH-370 or MH-17 was brought down by acts of terrorism. Such quick action helped maintain public perception and confidence.

Secondly, pursuant to the need for increased preparedness and prevention-capacity, Malaysia introduced new security measures, including the deployment of hi-tech monitoring systems and additional security personnel across all international airports in Malaysia. We have taken steps to improve information- and intelligence-sharing through deployment of the Advance Passenger Information System and the Advanced Passenger Screening System to provide early warning and curb possible travel of foreign terrorist fighters, in line with the provisions of resolution 2178 (2014). We have also strengthened our legal and operational framework by revamping the Malaysian National Security Council, which has, among its core functions, the assessment and monitoring of terrorist threats and activities in the country.

I am also pleased to share that the South-East Asian region through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is also giving priority to aviation security. The adoption of the ASEAN Transport Strategic Plan 2016-2025, the key regional policy document on aviation security, adopted in December 2015, is an example of increased coordination and cooperation in my region on this issue.

I wish to also take this opportunity to reassure all concerned that Malaysia, together with all our partners, remains committed to bringing closure to all outstanding questions on MH-370 and MH-17. We are most grateful for the encouragement and assistance we have received from all our partners and friends to this end. With specific regard to MH-17, I wish to reaffirm Malaysia's commitment to implementing the provisions of resolution 2166 (2014) and count on the support and cooperation of all concerned partners in this regard.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Malaysia's unwavering commitment to combating and eradicating the scourge of terrorism as part of our shared collective responsibility, including through joint, coordinated and concerted efforts at all levels. These efforts must be premised on the full respect for international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Pavlo Klimkin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Mr. Klimkin (Ukraine): Mr. President, I want to thank you for taking the laudable initiative to convene today's meeting. I also wish to thank our briefer today, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Ms. Fang Liu, for providing a real and extensive outlook on the topic and the work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in this field. It would be remiss of me not to commend the efforts of the United Kingdom, which we really appreciate, in preparing the resolution that was adopted today (resolution 2309 (2016)).

The key words here — civil aviation and terrorist attacks — remind me immediately of the tragic events of 11 September, which occurred just a few blocks from here. Fifteen years ago, the international community was prompted to take decisive steps in the fight against terrorism and to strengthen security regulations in civil aviation so as to reduce terrorist risks in this sphere.

Nevertheless, the terrorist threat to air transportation systems continues to grow. Such threats take different forms, including terrorist shootings aimed at bringing down aircraft, smuggling explosives on board, hijacking and using an aircraft as an improvised guided cruise missile, and exploiting the airways to move fighters and human or material resources to conflict zones. Other challenges include attempts to compromise security at

airports, including cyberattacks as well as conventional terrorist attacks in airports; insider threats; and threats of the use of improvised explosive devices, man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and other surface-to-air missiles against civilian targets, including during takeoff or landing.

Despite the activities of ICAO and other relevant organizations dealing with issues of aviation security, there is a persistent need to improve mechanisms for States' cooperation in this field and to increase their capacity to confront the terrorist threat.

The holding of today's meeting at such a high level proves the importance of this issue and the common understanding of the need to improve public confidence in safe air travel. Airports have long been attractive targets for terrorist groups attempting to cause numerous civilian casualties. Owing to the importance of the air transportation system in ensuring the proper functioning of modern societies, its destruction or any disruption of its work are bound to attract a significant level of public attention.

Taking into consideration the recent terrorist attacks against airports in Belgium and Turkey, provisions concerning the protection of such critical infrastructure facilities should be duly reflected in terrorism-prevention programmes. States should conduct specialized vulnerability assessments, in collaboration with airport operators and stakeholders, to identify weaknesses, interdependencies and ways of improving the protection of airports against a growing number of diverse threats, both physical and cyberrelated. Close cooperation between the relevant State authorities in this field with private operators should also be maintained.

We strongly believe that there is an urgent need for the United Nations and its specialized bodies, together with ICAO, to develop preventive measures against possible threats as well as to ensure strict and effective international and national controls on the import, export, transfer or retransfer and storage of MANPADS and other missile weapons to mitigate potential risks.

Regrettably, Ukraine has faced such a problem in dealing with the terrorist activities in the Donbass region of Ukraine carried out with the direct support of the Russian Federation since 2014. On 17 July 2014, Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 was shot down by terrorists in the sky over the eastern part of Ukraine, killing 298 people. This terrible atrocity is a potent reminder of the gravity of the threat posed to civil aviation by terrorist groups armed with such sophisticated weapons.

In this regard, I wish to underscore the need for the full implementation of resolution 2166 (2014), in particular with regard to the Security Council demand to bring to account those responsible for this incident and to cooperate fully with efforts to establish accountability.

As the Council may recall, last year's efforts to set up an international tribunal to prosecute those responsible was sabotaged in this Chamber owing to the veto of the Russian Federation. Such a tribunal, I am confident, would have been our most effective instrument for responding to this heinous crime. Nevertheless, we continue our work with other partner States within the joint investigation team and with other grieving nations to address the situation and to present options for a mechanism to establish full accountability. This should be done within the proper time frame, because justice delayed is justice denied.

The aforementioned horrendous crime prompted ICAO to undertake several initiatives related to conflict zones, including establishing the Task Force on Risks to Civil Aviation arising from Conflict Zones, setting up the Conflict Zone Information Repository, and publishing detailed guidance on the threats posed to commercial flights by surface-to-air missile systems.

We strongly support such ICAO activities and call for the enhancement of the global system of information-sharing about such threats. It is also imperative that special attention be given to conflict zones in the risk-assessment process during the mapping of flight routes.

Here I would like to highlight another important issue. The responsibility for air-traffic services in the high seas over the Simferopol Flight Information Region, which includes Crimea, was delegated to Ukraine by regional air navigation agreements as approved by an ICAO Council decision of February 1997. Ukraine has faithfully fulfilled its responsibilities and provides air-traffic services in accordance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.

Following the illegal occupation of Crimea in April 2014, the Russian Federation started to interfere in the international emergency frequency in the air-traffic service provided by Ukraine. Such actions create

serious threats for flights within international airspace over the high seas and run counter to the Chicago Convention and its annexes 15 and 11, as well as the relevant ICAO regulations in this area.

The Russian Federation, having unilaterally resorted to the provision of air navigation services within the Simferopol region, has also violated General Assembly 68/262, on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, adopted in March 2014. It is obvious that the publication of aeronautical information by the Russian Federation can only be regarded as an attempt to legitimize its unlawful activities.

We wish to emphasize the importance of strict adherence to the Standards and Recommended Practices of ICAO by all Member States without any exception, especially in the airspace over the high seas.

At present, the use of explosive devices constitutes a significant threat to civil aviation. The urgency of this risk is underlined by the number of incidents that took place in 2015 and 2016. Moreover, modern technologies that allow for the production of non-traceable weapons components bring this threat to a new level. This calls for introduction of additional security enhancements at airports, including screening protocols to reduce the risk of explosives or weapons entering the premises of being smuggled onboard the aircraft by passengers or facility employees.

Information-sharing among international partners is another tool to address the challenges faced by international civil aviation. Therefore, we encourage Member States to strengthen sharing agreements with foreign partners and to continue working closely with the law-enforcement and intelligence communities as well as competent international organizations such as INTERPOL to monitor for watch-listed terrorists.

This also brings us to the issue of stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters by countering their transit, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and implementing the Council's bans on terrorists. We believe that the primary obligation to prevent the movement of foreign fighters lies primarily with the source countries, which have to spot and stop their flows at the earliest stages.

We support universal implementation of Advance Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record data systems throughout the world and an active use of the INTERPOL Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database to check travellers' information against current sanctions lists. If duly implemented, these measures can be a classical win-win scenario for Governments and airlines. We call for ICAO and other relevant international organizations to assist those Member States in need to ensure universal implementation of the above-mentioned standards.

In conclusion, I would like to note that by adopting resolution 2309 (2016) today, we have sent a strong message to the international community on the need to focus its efforts in developing new standards of aviation security and safety to confront terrorist threats to civil aviation. To neutralize these threats effectively, we must ensure that our global and national plans to combat the terrorism scourge, including those introduced within the United Nations, are adaptive and responsive to emerging dangers.

The United Nations, its counter-terrorism agencies and bodies — such as the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force — and ICAO must play an absolutely proactive role in strengthening the capacities of Member States to achieve this goal.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of New Zealand.

New Zealand welcomes today's opportunity to discuss the serious threat to international peace and security posed by terrorist targeting of civil aviation.

I thank the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, Mr. Boris Johnson, for his leadership on resolution 2309 (2016), which was just adopted by the Council. Air links are critical to New Zealand. More than 99 per cent of our international visitors arrive by air, and around 15 per cent of our exports are transported by air. The security of international civil aviation is therefore of vital importance to my country.

As we commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks in New York, we need no reminding that terrorist threats to civil aviation are not a new phenomenon. The Council has already taken action to address the travel of foreign terrorist fighters, including by restricting their access to planes as a means of transport. But recent attacks demonstrate that civil aviation remains an attractive target for terrorists, and advances in technology have made terrorist threats to aviation harder to detect.

The international community must remain vigilant in ensuring that international standards are responsive to a constantly-evolving threat environment. As countries gather for the triennial session of the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Assembly later this month, we encourage them to reflect on the collective views of this Council in their deliberations. ICAO remains the primary forum for improving international aviation security standards and deserves the support of the international community and of the Council.

New Zealand supports an approach to aviation security that is risk-based and tailored to different circumstances. This is particularly important for States with limited capacities and lower risk profiles, including the many small island developing States of our region. It does not make sense to expect the same systems and approach from Tuvalu as we have from the United States.

But agreeing to standards is only the first step. The more challenging and important task is ensuring that these are effectively implemented. New Zealand therefore welcomes the focus in today's resolution on international cooperation, including technical assistance. We continue to provide significant technical support in aviation security efforts, in particular to improve regional air security in the Pacific. However, enhanced aviation security can only ever provide a short-term bandage. The far greater challenge lies in addressing the conditions that motivate and enable those who commit these acts of terrorism.

In this respect, we need to reflect on the effectiveness of this organ, which is charged with maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council's track record of delivering sustainable resolution of major conflicts is poor, and the resources of the United Nations are heavily focused on providing peacekeeping and humanitarian support for victims of conflict rather than preventing conflict in the first place, or resolving conflicts before they become intractable. Major improvements to the United Nations machinery, including this Council, are well overdue in these respects. They are matters that all members of this Council have a responsibility to address.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Ybáñez, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain.

Mr. Ybáñez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the presidency of New Zealand and to you, Minister McCully, for convening this meeting. I also congratulate the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, Minister Johnson, and his team on their good work in introducing and facilitating the adoption of resolution 2309 (2016), which we have just adopted. I also thank Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her excellent briefing.

Spain is aware of the threat posed by terrorism to civil aviation, and has therefore supported and co-sponsored todays' resolution from the start. It is obvious that civil aviation is a priority target of terrorist groups around the world. It is a critical sector of our economies and no State is free of this threat. Aircraft in flight are particularly vulnerable, and they and their passengers are far from their own national security forces during long periods. The terrorists know this and try to take exploit the opportunities offered by this weakes link in the chain of protection. Often, they have an edge over the States that are entrusted with protecting their civilians.

Every State knows that, no matter how effective their security measures may be, the security of its nationals depends on the effectiveness of the measures in the States where they embark, transit and land. Citizens of all countries can be threatened in any corner of the world in the air spaces subject to the sovereignty of one or several States, not one of which may be the issuer of their passports. Terrorism is indeed a global threat and, by definition, its threat to civil aviation makes it a global threat. Joint responses from all Governments and the same security protocols, standards and codes of conduct are therefore critically important.

By adopting resolution 2309 (2016), we are hoping that when we fly the security framework will be the same for all citizens, regardless of where they come from or where they are going. We must seek to avoid the vulnerabilities that may arise in any region and do so pursuant to the spirit of ICAO and its motto that no country will be left behind. For reasons of clear solidarity, but also because citizens of any country may be at risk wherever they are, it is in all our interests to ensure that no Government lacks the necessary capacities to address this threat.

We commend the extraordinary work of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Our objective in supporting today's resolution is to give full

backing to its work. Indeed, we see here a wonderful example of good practices and cooperation among various actors of the United Nations system that are responsible for the fight against terrorism. We therefore believe it important and strategic for ICAO and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to maintain and strengthen their cooperative efforts against terrorism that targets civil aviation.

The Security Council reminds countries to abide by the ICAO recommendations and to give it the support it needs not just to prevent but to anticipate this ever-changing menace, ever ready to come up with new threats to security. My country is an active participant in various national and international projects related to the terrorist threat to aviation that are consonant with the provisions of resolution 2309 (2016), which we have just adopted. We are working on areas such as methodologies and the use of technology to detect explosives. We are also working on man-portable air defence systems, drones and ways of identifying terrorists at border points. We are also implementing advanced passenger recognition systems. We believe that the more information we can exchange, the greater and more immediate the effect on improved flight security.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that with the work that is currently under way, coupled with today's resolution, civil aviation is likely to be ever more safe and secure, but we must ensure that every State complies faithfully with the resolution's provisions.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to welcome you, Sir, and thank you for presiding over today's Security Council meeting. I would also like to thank Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her briefing.

As globalization continues to advance, the air transport sector is playing an increasingly important role in social and economic development and progress at the national level. However, terror attacks targeting the international civil aviation system are a scourge that destroys lives and property. Maintaining the safety and security of international civil aviation is vital to the promotion of international travel, interaction and cooperation, intraregional and interregional connectivity and global economic recovery and development. In that regard, I would like to share China's perspective on the issues, focusing on three points.

First, we should focus our efforts on improving the civil aviation safety and security system and reinforcing security measures, establishing a multi-pronged approach that covers airport security, ground security screening, industry regulation and internal risk control, and all aimed at strengthening civil aviation security safeguards. Resolution 2309 (2016), which we have just adopted, refers explicity to States' obligations to do more in such areas as airport security checks, sharing passenger information and security-screening-technology sharing and cooperation. It is incumbent on all States to implement the provisions of today's resolution, launch more substantive initiatives in the relevant areas and continue to improve civil aviation security standards.

Secondly, we should strengthen international cooperation on civil aviation security. States should commit to the notion that humankind is a community with a shared future, and should work to comprehensively strengthen such cooperation. Countries with more developed civil aviation sectors should take the real-life difficulties that developing countries are dealing with seriously, and help them develop their capacities in the areas of building infrastructure, training and providing logistical services. The Security Council, as the world's primary body for the maintenance of international peace and security, should provide political guidance and secure the commitment of all parties to strengthened international cooperation and civil aviation security. ICAO, as the technical agency responsible for formulating aviation safety and security standards, should help States to comprehensively implement of the relevant international standards. The Council and ICAO should improve their synergy by strengthening their division of labour and collaboration, both working within the purview of their respective mandates.

Thirdly, we should work unremittingly to combat terrorist acts that compromise the safety and security of civil aviation. Every State should maintain uniform standards and take a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism, with no distinction between acts of terror, all of which should be firmly countered, regardless of the countries they target or the means they employ. International action against terrorism should promote the greatest possible scope for the leadership of the United Nations and the Security Council, abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, strengthen effective coordination, create an internationally united front against terrorism and

maintain an uncompromisingly combative posture towards it. In the light of the characteristics of terrorist activities relating to civil aviation, and the requirements of resolution 2309 (2016), all parties should improve their intelligence sharing at both international and regional levels, enhance their cooperation on border control and law enforcement and take effective action against cross-border movements of terrorists, especially when they are returning to their countries of origin.

China is an important member of the international counter-terrorism community. We will continue to promote bilateral and multilateral anti-terror cooperation in accordance with our laws on counter-terrorism and civil aviation safety and security, and with international conventions. We will continue to raise our civil aviation safety and security standards and work with the international community to fight terrorism effectively and keep aviation safe and secure.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): There can be no doubt as to the urgency of today's topic. Civil aviation has been and will remain a highly attractive target for terrorists. At the outset, we would like to once again express our condolences to the families and friends of all those who have lost their lives as a result of air transport tragedies. We would also like to thank Ms. Liu Fang, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her detailed briefing on ICAO's role and efforts in the field of aviation security.

The Russian delegation took an active part in developing resolution 2309 (2016), which the Council adopted today, aimed at adding impetus to States' efforts to implement ICAO standards and the provisions of the counter-terrorism conventions, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions. In considering the specifics of aviation security, the international community should be guided primarily by the work of ICAO, as the specialized international organization in the field. The ICAO Assembly will meet in Montreal in a few days' time and is expected to take a number of important decisions related to aviation security and terrorist threats. It will present a report on progress in implementing the ICAO Comprehensive Aviation Security Strategy, and will address the issue of developing a global aviation security plan by 2018. We are pleased that the drafters of the resolution took into account our proposals designed to ensure that, without undermining the ICAO mandate, the Security Council's new initiative is clearly incorporated into its efforts, decisions and plans for the direction its activities should take in the future.

Terrorist threats against civil aviation are evolving. Criminals are constantly taking advantage of new technologies to seek new ways to circumvent security systems, including in airports. It is therefore important to continue to strengthen our capacity to react rapidly to new challenges as they appear, particularly those related to cybersecurity, landside security, remotely piloted aircraft systems and improvised explosive devices. One of the key objectives of today's decision is to urge States to join in increasing the widespread and effective adoption of existing aviation security standards and recommendations. Ultimately, it is our job to combine our efforts to achieve an integrated and sustainable system for protecting international civil aviation against illegal interference.

We welcome the productive cooperation between the Security Council's counter-terrorism entities and ICAO, such as when Ms. Fang Liu briefed the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) in June. ICAO has also begun cooperating with the Monitoring Group of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities. We note the regular flow of information from ICAO to the United Nations on efforts to combat terrorism, included in the relevant reports of the Secretary-General. Today's resolution is aimed at strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and ICAO, primarily through the CTC, in order to identify gaps in States' aviation security. We urge both the Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force to use that analysis to improve programmes for technical assistance to States.

We look forward to a planned special meeting of the CTC in 2017 on the terrorist threats to civil aviation. Our country will continue to undertake decisive steps to counter terrorist threats. That applies fully to the threat to civil aviation. However, that evil will only be defeated by closing ranks. We are convinced that the fight against any form of terrorism will require the further consolidation of efforts with the good-faith implementation of States' international commitments.

I am forced now to say a few words with regard to the statement just made by the Ukrainian delegation. The Ukrainian delegation did not limit itself to the

topic that was planned for our discussion. It attempted to hold this meeting hostage so that it could advance unacceptable provocations. We are not going to yield to such provocations.

We will limit ourselves to noting that, since the Ukrainian side decided to raise the subject of the disaster concerning Flight MH-17, it would be good to recognize the guilt of Kyiv in that matter and its responsibility for the fact that the Ukrainian authorities did not close the airspace over the eastern part of the country in which Kyiv had deployed major military operations. We have again heard no recognition or acknowledgement of that responsibility.

As far as Russia is concerned, we insisted that resolution 2166 (2014) adopted by the Council on the downing of the Malaysia Airlines plane include provisions on the need to carry out an independent international investigation in accordance with the governing principles of international civil aviation and with ICAO playing a leading role. Our delegation called for the active use of the provisions of resolution 2166 (2014), which provides for comprehensive assistance by the United Nations in the investigation. Unfortunately, the Secretary-General has not submitted a range of proposals for United Nations assistance to the Security Council. It would be beneficial, in our view, for ICAO also to join the investigation.

We call for the rapid adoption of yet another resolution that would ensure access to the crash site for the investigation mission. Unfortunately, interested parties preferred bilateral agreements with Ukraine, which, regrettably, were overly protracted and did not allow for the immediate launch of an investigation. We insisted on the inclusion of a provision in the text of resolution 2166 (2014) for an immediate cessation of all military activities in the area immediately bordering the crash site. Kyiv violated that provision in August 2014, when the Ukrainian authorities unilaterally declared that they would disengage from the ceasefire, as a result of which the investigation mission was forced to cease its work for a lengthy period. A great deal of time has passed, but the criminal investigation has not yet been concluded. And it has been carried out in a closed format. Can one consider it to be an independent, impartial and unbiased investigation? That is questionable. Only the future will tell. It is nevertheless getting harder for us to accept that after the statements that we have heard here today.

In the course of the work on resolution 2309 (2016), which we just adopted, the Ukrainian delegation unilaterally attempted to water down proposals that would confirm the responsibility of States for the security of civil aviation within their air space. I think everyone understands why they did so.

Turning to the issue with regard to air traffic control over Crimea and the Black Sea, Ukraine was also unable to refrain from politicizing that topic, including within ICAO, which would have entailed additional costs for carriers and inconvenienced passengers. Above all, it would have created flight safety risks. Russia is able to provide the necessary information in connection with air security in its airspace above Crimea and the Black Sea.

Mr. Okamura (Japan): Allow me to express my gratitude to you, Sir, for convening today's important and timely meeting on aviation security. I also thank Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her briefing. Above all, I would like to thank the United Kingdom and Mr. Boris Johnson for taking the lead in putting today's meeting together. We believe that it is timely for the Security Council to take this issue up, given the growing threat to the security of aircraft and airports in recent years.

Civil aviation has been an attractive target for terrorists over the past decades, as this city remembers very vividly and literally through what it witnessed 15 years ago. There has been much progress in improving aviation security worldwide since that tragedy, but there have been enough instances to remind us that the threat against aviation security remains high.

Resolution 2309 (2016), which was just adopted unanimously, provides the political momentum to accelerate global efforts to address the issue. Japan was therefore pleased to co-sponsor the resolution. We believe that it sends a strong political message of our unified determination to the international community.

According to statistics published by ICAO, Japan is the world's seventh largest air-transport State. That single statistic is indicative of the critical importance of aviation security in our national interests. Today, I would like to highlight three ways in which Japan has been working to improve aviation security worldwide.

First, there are our domestic efforts. Japan is widely known for its public safety, and, at the same

time, Japanese authorities are nevertheless working tirelessly to mitigate possible threats of terrorism to civil aviation. For example, the installation of body scanners in airports throughout the country is under progress, a measure driven by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism.

Secondly, we provide international assistance to partner States. Last year, Japan funded the placement of surveillance cameras in international airports in Africa to bolster their security. In South Asia, over the past three years, Japan has provided assistance that can mitigate terrorism risks to civilian aviation to Pakistan and Bangladesh. We have also hosted a seminar on aviation security with our partners from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund. In addition to those past efforts, Prime Minister Abe announced earlier this month that Japan will provide approximately $450 million over the next three years to Asia for comprehensive counter-terrorism measures, including the enhancement of airport security. Japan will remain engaged in assisting other countries to address the threat.

Thirdly, I would like to touch upon the role that Japan has played in ICAO. Japan firmly supports the important role that ICAO has played in the area of aviation security and has been actively working on the Aviation Security Panel and various working groups under the Panel, including the meeting of the working group on guidance material that Japan hosted in Fukuoka last January. Beyond our activities on the Panel, Japan has been the second largest contributor to the regular ICAO budget since 1987 and makes large contributions to activities related to security.

There is a strong need for the international community to keep taking steps to improve aviation security. In that context, I would like to refer to the Group of Seven (G-7) action plan on countering terrorism and violent extremism, which was developed in May under the Japanese presidency of the G-7 to strengthen the overall capacity of the international community to fight against terrorism and violent extremism, including in the area of aviation security. As mentioned in the action plan, Japan calls upon all States to duly implement the standards of annex 17 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aciation and also to recognize and address the threat to access control and other airport landside-security-related measures covered therein.

We also believe that there is room for improvement to fill the gaps between the outcome of ICAO audits and aviation security measures on the ground. We look forward to furthering our discussions at the upcoming session of the ICAO Assembly, which will start next week and at which Japan will contribute to the discussion on the development of a global aviation security plan.

Our fight against terrorist threats to civil aviation is far from over. As a responsible member of the international community and of the Security Council, Japan will continue its efforts in tackling our common threat.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is grateful to you, Sir, for convening this informative meeting to address an issue of particular importance to the international community and our country. We also appreciate the briefing of Mr. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

My delegation voted in favour of resolution 2309 (2016), based on our firm commitment to fight terrorism and our categorical rejection of the commission of terrorist acts, whatever their motivation, whenever or by whomsover they are committed, because such acts deliberately undermine international peace and security and constitute flagrant violations of international law.

The most recent terrorist attacks, particularly those committed by Da'esh, are evidence of how vulnerability in the face of that terrible scourge and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters have become a global one. More than 30,000 persons, including youths and women, from more than 100 countries have joined terrorist groups, as noted in the most recent reports of the Monitoring Group of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999,) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities.

Civil aviation has always been a target of terrorist acts. One only need to consider the attacks against the Cubana de Aviación plane in 1976, which cost the lives of 73 Cuban athletes, among other incidents. However, since the terrible attack in New York on 11 September 2001, we have seen greater awareness of the phenomenon and the need to improve and strengthen civil aviation security regulations. However, the recent attack against Flight 9268 of the Russian airline Metrojet, almost a

year ago, reminds us that there is still much to do in this area.

We would like to pay tribute to all the victims of such violent acts..We note with regret that, on some occasions, those events have been used to exacerbate the political rhetoric against specific countries. The fight against terrorism in civil aviation requires cooperation and trust among all of us, because terrorist groups continue to come up wiht new ways and means to strike.

The security of international civil aviation plays a key role in the complex web of preventing and combating terrorism. While this is ultimately a question in the ambit of the Security Council as the organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security, my country believes that ICAO is the sole specialized agency with the competence to build consensus in developing and monitoring the standards and recommended practices required for international civil aviation. In that regard, Venezuela considers it necessary to continue to strengthen national civil aviation systems, including their evaluation mechanisms, without undermining each State's authority and sovereignty so that we can effectively and on a sustainable basis tackle the terrorist threat. In that respect, capacity-building, technical assistance, transferring technology on favourable terms and mobilizing resources are of critical importance. Similarly, strengthening international and regional cooperation will prove to be greatly important in that battle.

Venezuela considers that, in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, the preventive approach is always the best way to tackle this scourge. It is important that we adopt and implement coordinated initiatives tailored to each national case and reality, geared towards undermining the clear strategy of groups with extremist ideologies that have decided to promote violence and intolerance. It is also important to address the root causes fuelling this reprehensible practice and to devise effective and innovative strategies to counter extremist and terrorist narratives and to help our societies to think critically. The aim is to prevent radicalization, recruitment and the mobilization of resources, including through the inappropriate use of communications and information technologies.

It is very important that no country protect or give haven to the perpetrators of terrorist crimes against civil aviation. There can be no justification for any terrorist act. We must all be committed in the fight against this phenomenon.

Venezuela believes that the fight against terrorism must take place within the framework of stepped up international cooperation, in accordance with existing international and regional instruments, including the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, with full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. If we depart from those premises to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, we will be contributing to its radicalization.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the need that, more than ever, we must be frank and resolute in fighting terrorism and that we do not selectively draw on the provisions set out in the relevant international instruments and resolutions of this multilateral forum that prohibit the transfer of small arms and lights weapons, including the man-portable air defence systems, as well as the financing, training and provision of havens to terrorist groups, as well as the implementation in a comprehensive and balanced manner of the four pillars of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this informative meeting on the terrorist threat to civil aviation.

As was clearly expressed in the concept note (S/2016/791, annex), the Security Council has focused its attention on other emerging aspects of international terrorism, such as its financing and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. Today, the expansion and evolution in aviation terrorism requires us to concentrate our efforts on its prevention and suppression.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her briefing and to commend the work of the United Kingdom in leading the negotiations that allowed us today to adopt the important resolution 2309 (2016), which Uruguay also co-sponsored.

In recent years, terrorist acts against civil aviation have adopted forms that transcend the classic definition of aviation piracy. In addition to the diversion and hijacking of aircraft and hostages, we have also seem other forms of crimes, such as attacks perpetrated

on airport facilities. The Beijing Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation and its Protocol of 2010 criminalize, inter alia, the use of civil aircraft as weapons to cause deaths, injuries or harm, the use of dangerous materials to attack aircraft or other objects, as well as cyberattacks against air-traffick-control systems or stations.

There is no doubt that terrorists have found civil aviation a useful target, not solely for destructive purposes but also for the media exposure they so eagerly seek. Their acts have huge international impact due to their lethal and multiple side effects, with large-scale psychological and social impacts. The high number of victims of various nationalities in attacks against aviation can produce, without doubt, the most devastating and critical aspect, but it is not the only kind. The economic, trade, political, cultural and other types of consequences are also myriad. I recall that millions of persons use aircraft for the purposes of work, tourism or visiting their families, and that States base and promote their relations on the basis of the numerous exchanges facilitated by that means of transport.

Attacks on civil aviation are also attacks on closer relations and dialogue among civilizations, regional integration and the wide range of exchanges unique to the era of globalization. As early as 1944, the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation noted in its preamble that

> "the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, yet its abuse can become a threat to the general security".

Resolution 2309 (2016), beyond its unobjectionable purposes, is underpinned by the spirit of cooperation and solidarity that must prevail to address and defeat international terrorism.

My country abides by the international legal instruments that make up the counter-terrorism framework for global civil aviation. We attach particular importance to international standards and best practices in addressing civil aviation security. We are party to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed in Chicago on 7 December 1944, and deposited our ratification instrument on 14 January 1954. By way of various national laws, Uruguay approved the Tokyo Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, of 14 September 1963 and The Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft of 16 December 1970 and adhered to its Protocol for the suppression of unlawful acts of violence at airports serving international civil aviation in February 1988. We also approved the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1979, and the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection, signed on 1 March 1991.

At the institutional level, our national civil aviation and aviation infrastructure directorate is the competent agency tasked with implementing civil aviation policy in Uruguay. Through it, we seek to guarantee the security, regularity and efficiency of aviation operations and the delivery of services in our national airspace throughout Uruguay, in accordance with the relevant international standards and requirements. We have in place regulations to protect civil aviation against unlawful acts of interference, based on Uruguay's aviation regulation 17 on aviation security and relevant guidelines and directives.

In terms of policy, decree 267/003, of 1 July 2003, authorized the national aviation security programme, which is aimed at ensuring the security, regularity and efficiency of international civil aviation in our country. It further provides the necessary safeguards against unlawful acts of interference through regulations, methods and procedures. The programme aims to maintain the security of national and foreign carriers providing services from Uruguay and the security of civilian airports servicing international flights. It is geared towards meeting the international standards and recommendations in annex 17 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, as well as the relevant provisions on aviation security set out in annexes 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14.

Through decree 267/003, my country also established the national committee for civil aviation security, which, inter alia, advises the competent security authority regarding necessary safety measures in tackling threats to civil aviation, airports and services. Furthermore, decree 225/010, of 26 July 2010, establishes the policy framework for proper coordination of the State's intelligence services.

Uruguay believes that, in order to address the growing, ever-changing terrorist threat to civil aviation, it is necessary to implement the safety

standards approved by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), so as to achieve better standards, systems and methods linked to the various operational aspects of civil aviation. However it is clear that many countries have neither the technical capacity and knowledge nor financial resources necessary to implement those standards. It is therefore important that the countries with such capacity provide technical assistance, including technology transfer and programmes, as well as financial resources, to the countries in need. Accordingly, cooperation is proven to be the key element for concrete and effective implementation of best practices and the highest standards of civil aviation security. Uruguay considers cooperation as an imperative that must be achieved at both regional and international levels and further complemented by efficient coordination under the aegis of the ICAO.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating our firm conviction that the changing and growing challenges generated by terrorist threats to civil aviation can be successfully addressed only from that perspective. That is to say, we must reaffirm our indelible commitment to invest national capacities and resources commensurate with the requisite of achieving that objective.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We thank the New Zealand delegation for convening this meeting on the terrorist threat to civil aviation. We are grateful to Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), for her comprehensive briefing on the crucial issue of civil aviation in contemporary life.

The international community is faced with myriad new threats to peace and security that are a main cause for the weakening of the old system of collective security that the international community relied upon after the Second World War. Among those threats is international terrorism, which has reached an unprecedented dimension and boldness. Terrorism has become a global phenomenon of unpredictable character. As such, dealing with the issue of civil aviation security and the threats posed by international terrorism to that vital sector has become a top priority to be dealt with.

International terrorism has changed the way in which international aviation operates traditionally, namely, as a symbol of freedom enhancing increased intimacy among the peoples of the world. It is an evolution that terrorists seek to curb and undermine.

Terrorist attacks against civil aviation, as any other kind of international terrorist act, constitute a threat to international peace and security, and as such are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of the motivations or aims of its perpetrators. The terrorist threat to civil aviation has forced a more coordinated response on the part of the international community, mainly towards preventive anti-terrorism measures aimed at foiling such attacks in conformity with international treaties and conventions on civil aviation.

We commend the work of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the enactment of regulations, practices and procedures to protect civil aviation against illegal interference and to ensure that those measures are appropriate against the surge of security threats.

Angola, as a member of ICAO, has been working closely with that agency with a view to aligning its domestic practice and procedures with ICAO directives, in particular with regard to transportation infrastructure and technical expertise. We have adopted a vast number of measures and legislations to verify and monitor the civil aviation sector by incorporating the norms enacted by ICAO into the national legal framework. This has been at the forefront of our efforts as a means of contributing to the protection and security of civil aviation. The restructuring of the National Institute of Civil Aviation in order to make it an efficient and credible regulatory mechanism; the reform of the the National Company of Airports Exploration and Air Navigation to efficiently manage airport infrastructure; and the restructuring of the TAAG Angola Airlines are some of the measures adopted in line with the recommendations of ICAO.

By adopting resolution 2309 (2016), which we were pleased to co-sponsor, the Security Council is sending an unequivocal message on the importance of fighting the threat posed to civil aviation by terrorist groups. It also highlights the importance of adequate security parameters for civil aviation, enhancing technical cooperation and mitigating the threat of attacks in the framework of the global fight against terrorism.

In conclusion, we wish to reiterate Angola's commitment to working towards implementing effective measures to counter and mitigate this threat, particularly through reinforcing partnerships and applying the norms and standards set by the

International Civil Aviation Organization in order to strengthen security in this vital sector of contemporary life.

The President: The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): I would like to make a couple of points in response to the Russian delegation.

First, let me remind all those present in the Chamber, especially those who have conveniently forgotten, of what happened two years ago. If it were not for Russian weapons, the presence of Russian troops and the sustained effort to fuel a military conflict in the Donbas region, we would not have to discuss the downing of MH-17.

Secondly, Ukraine has cooperated fully with all international partners on this issue. I do not think that any party has anything to say about our readiness to cooperate. There was an issue regarding access to the MH-17 crash site; access was blocked by people wearing not the Ukrainian military uniform, but other military uniforms. We insisted on immediate access right away, but for whatever reason it did not happen.

Thirdly, last year the whole world witnessed Russia veto the attempt to establish an international tribunal on MH-17. Ukraine has nothing to hide. We want the truth to become known, and we want the perpetrators to be brought to justice; but somehow this effort has foundered. Why? We all know how it happened. Quite a few of the delegations here were also present last year.

Finally, on a different subject, we really appreciate the Russian Federation establishing the new practice of disclosing to the whole United Nations community, in public in the Chamber, details of texts negotiated by Council members. This is a positive step towards implementing transparency, and we look forward to the continuation of this practice on the Russian side.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russia) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to respond very briefly to the delegation of Ukraine. This is a serious event. We are discussing the fight against terrorism — real terrorism, not that of which he is attempting to accuse the inhabitants of the eastern part of his country. I call on him to join this very important work, rather than continuing to speculate on this topic and the human tragedies that have taken place.

The President: The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I would encourage an early end to this exchange.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): I apologize. We have just witnessed a classic case of switching the blame and obfuscating the situation. I have never mentioned or blamed anybody, including any citizens, living in the eastern part of our country. If I am mistaken, I would really appreciate being corrected. I was talking first about Russian military aggression, and secondly, about terrorism. That is what we experienced — State-sponsored terrorism. We may have different opinions regarding this, but this is how Ukraine sees it.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7776

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7776th meeting

Friday, 23 September 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. McCully/Van Bohemen	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Badr
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Senegal	Mr. Ndiaye
	Spain	Mr. Ybañez
	Ukraine	Mr. Klimkin/Mr. Fesko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Sharma
	United States of America	Mr. Kerry
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Foreign Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Andorra, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following to participate in this meeting: Mr. Kim Won-soo, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/800, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Andorra, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. John Kerry, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mr. Kerry (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. Twenty years ago, President Bill Clinton entered the General Assembly with a pen in hand, the pen that he had used to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the same pen used by President John F. Kennedy decades earlier to bring the Limited Test-Ban Treaty into life. At the time, President Clinton declared the Treaty would be yet another essential step towards a century in which the roles and risks of nuclear weapons could be further reduced and ultimately eliminated.

Today, our countries have an opportunity to vote once again to sign onto and to reaffirm the CTBT's promise of a safer, more secure and more peaceful planet. The draft resolution (S/2016/800) that we have an opportunity to adopt this morning is a strong and necessary statement of our principles and promises as a global community. It reaffirms the de facto norm — I emphasize, a norm — in the world today against nuclear testing. It acknowledges the legitimate interests of States that fully and faithfully renounce nuclear weapons to receive assurances against the use of the threat of the use of nuclear weapons, and that those assurances will be upheld. It reinforces the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its disarmament goals. It builds support for the international efforts to strengthen verification and monitoring systems. And it encourages nations to make the necessary preparations for the day when the Treaty enters into force.

I want to emphasize that the draft resolution does not impose a legal prohibition on testing, nor does it compel any Government to adopt new reporting requirements. But it does reinforce the core purposes and objectives of the CTBT itself, that is, to diminish our reliance on nuclear devices, to reduce competition among nuclear Powers and to promote responsible disarmament.

Next month in Reykjavik, the thirtieth anniversary of the Gorbachev-Reagan meeting will be celebrated and remembered, and I want everybody to think about where we were. I grew up in a world of hiding under my desk in school and being told to take cover and train for the possibility of a nuclear war — none of

which would have done any good, as we know. I can remember years in the Senate when I wanted to be on the arms control observer group, with luminaries such as Pat Moynihan and Ted Kennedy and John Warner and Sam Nunn, people who worked a lifetime to move towards responsible efforts here. Throughout the years, we watched as the United States and the former Soviet Union engaged in the arms race — tit for tat, each doing something that led the other to feel they had to respond — until we had 50,000 warheads facing each other, until that moment of Reykjavik, when the two Presidents came out and said, "This is insanity; we have to move in a different direction".

Ever since then, that is exactly what the world has been doing. We have moved in a different direction. From 50,000 warheads we are now down to about 1,550, and we have proposed to move even further down. Brilliant people have spent a lifetime looking at this — former Secretary of Defense Jim Schlesinger, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Bill Perry and Sam Nunn — people whom one would not expect to see talking about the possibility of a world without nuclear weapons. Most recently, the United States and Iran spent two long years negotiating what everybody thought was the improbable. Two nations that had not talked to each other since 1979 began a conversation in the room right in back of the Chamber, the first time I came here for the General Assembly. We turned that into a nation actually giving up a nuclear programme and making it clear to the world it was willing to move away from the path of a nuclear weapon in order to make the world safer.

Two decades after that process began, therefore, there may be some who question the value of pursuing this Treaty or investing in its adoption, because the world has changed dramatically. Almost every member of the United Nations has now renounced the option of testing, and responsible Governments everywhere are committed to reducing the dangers that are posed by nuclear materials and nuclear weapons. Yet we have been reminded in recent weeks of the absolute necessity of supporting the CTBT. North Korea's latest nuclear test is a challenge to the Security Council's leadership. It is a challenge to the norm that I just articulated. It is a challenge and a direct threat to international stability and peace. It is a dangerous and reckless act of provocation that we have to summon a determined and effective answer to.

Today, this morning, is an affirmation of our willingness to make that clear, to give that answer, to take a step that says we will not lose our commitment, we will remain committed to moving in the direction of ending the threat of nuclear war. Today is also a reminder of the value of the CTBT. The actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and our response demonstrate the effectiveness of the International Monitoring system, the International Data Centre and the broader verification and detection regime. This entire episode has offered a stark reminder of why the infrastructure of the Treaty is so vital and why adopting this draft resolution is so important.

Our affirmative vote here is a sign of our unwavering commitment to a safer world in which nuclear technology is used solely for peaceful purposes and the risk of nuclear conflict is no more.

Right now, the United States Government is engaged in a process with the Senate, where we have many new members who have not previously been part of this debate, in which we are beginning to literally explain to and educate those members about what the advances in technology do for us. In today's modern world of virtual capacity, computerization and artificial intelligence, we do not need to blow up weapons to know what we can do. We have the ability to do this, and I would simply like to say to everyone in the Chamber that I can think of few greater gifts that we and our generation could give to the next than an affirmation that we will continue to move away from the possibilities of nuclear weaponry. Our action today can show people everywhere that a world without nuclear weapons might actually be possible, and that we are going to do everything responsible in our capacity to make that day a reality.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Pavlo Klimkin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Mr. Klimkin (Ukraine): The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) process is of course a cornerstone of global security and, as one of its staunch supporters, we welcome the Security Council's initiative in adopting today's draft resolution (S/2016/800), aimed at encouraging continuing progress towards the Treaty's entry into force. That is fundamental, and we all understand that there are a number of challenges involved, such as those just mentioned by Secretary Kerry regarding the fact

that North Korea continues to be able to conduct nuclear tests. But we also understand — and my own diplomatic career began precisely in this area of nuclear disarmament — how important it is that we strengthen the entire non-proliferation regime.

In drafting today's resolution, we decided to include the issue of security guarantees, which has been the subject of discussion within the CTBT process for a long time. I would like to recall in that regard that the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons included a clear clause on the necessity for fully respecting all existing commitments with regard to security assurances. Since today's draft resolution mentions security assurances given in 1995, it is vitally important to keep in mind that we also have other assurances, such as those in the Budapest Memorandum, signed in December 1994, which included very clear obligations for the three nuclear States concerned regarding respect for the independence, sovereignty and existing borders of Ukraine. The paragraph following that part obliged all those States to affirm

> "their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine".

The primary breach of that security assurance by a particular country — namely, the Russian Federation — raises two basic issues. One, of course, is whether we can trust the security assurances that are mentioned in today's draft resolution; the issue of trust as it relates to the whole non-proliferation regime is also of fundamental importance. The second is whether those security guarantees are sufficient to enable us to achieve real progress towards nuclear disarmament. I would therefore like to urge the Security Council to look further down the road of the process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and all our related efforts, and to once again remind everyone of the absolute necessity and crucial importance of respect for all existing commitments with regard to security assurances. Any breach of such security assurances should be seen as a fundamental challenge for all of us.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Hesham Badr, Vice-Minister for Multilateral Relations and International Security of Egypt.

Mr. Badr (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Contrary to our usual rule, I will deliver my statement in English, owing to the technical nature of the topic under discussion and also so that we can be sure, in view of its vital importance, that our message is accurately conveyed.

(*spoke in English*)

Egypt's commitment to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime is unwavering. For decades, nuclear disarmament has been a top priority of our foreign policy, and it continues to be a significant one for the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Our interest is founded in our long-standing belief that nuclear weapons present a grave threat to international peace and security and that collective global action is needed to eliminate them.

It is in that context that I wish to express our discontent and dissatisfaction with today's draft resolution (S/2016/800) on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is seriously flawed and does not deserve the Security Council's attention. Its contribution to the nuclear disarmament regime is minimal and ineffective. Rather than strengthening that regime, the draft resolution squanders an opportunity to emphasize how urgent it is that we advance nuclear disarmament. We regret that it was introduced without incorporating several essential amendments suggested by my delegation. I would like to address six specific concerns that we have about the draft resolution.

The first is the fact that the Security Council is not the appropriate forum for addressing the CTBT in the way the draft resolution attempts to do. Developments and progress related to the Treaty are regularly examined by the Preparatory Commission and the Provisional Technical Secretariat. The Council's intrusion into the dynamics and technicalities of the CTBT creates unnecessary duality and generates an atmosphere that is not conducive to inclusive deliberations. All States parties and signatories to the CTBT should be fully engaged in any discussion of relevance both to it and to its technical bodies and verification regime. Such discussion should not be limited to members of the Security Council.

Secondly, the draft resolution fails to highlight the centrality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Despite a modest reference to it in the preamble to the draft resolution, the NPT is completely overlooked in its operative

paragraphs, despite being the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is surprising that, while the draft resolution encourages promotion of the CTBT's universality, it makes no reference whatever to the importance of achieving universality for the NPT. What is the reason for the eagerness about the former and complete silence about the latter? We call on all NPT member States to promote the universality of the NPT, promptly and actively. As the key foundation of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, the NPT deserves greater prominence.

Thirdly, it is unusual, if not remarkable, that a draft resolution dealing with the CTBT fails to adequately address the urgency of concrete steps towards achieving nuclear disarmament. While nuclear testing should certainly be ceased in its entirety, as the Treaty clearly advocates, the international community has a much more pressing obligation and responsibility to advance nuclear disarmament. If the Council is genuinely concerned about the perils of nuclear weapons and their potential use or testing, it would only be logically coherent to treat the cause and not just the symptom. By exclusively addressing nuclear testing in this draft resolution, the Council bypasses the central point that the continued possession of nuclear weapons in itself, and the constant prolongation by those that possess them to engage in meaningful disarmament, is what challenges, if not threatens, global stability.

This draft resolution, inappropriately, makes no reference to the obligation stipulated in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that calls on nuclear-weapon States to achieve nuclear disarmament. It turns a blind eye to the outcome documents of the NPT Review Conferences of 1995, 2000 and 2010, including the 13 practical steps. In fact, the draft resolution does not adequately respond to the CTBT's own preambular section, which stressed the

> "need for continued systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, and of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

Nuclear disarmament therefore should have been the priority in this draft resolution. It should have expressed its unequivocal rejection of the modernization of stockpiles of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States and the role they devote to nuclear weapons in their strategic doctrines. Let me take this opportunity, therefore, to categorically reject the notion put forth by some States that nuclear stockpile maintenance is consistent with NPT objectives. It is not. The maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons runs contrary to the legal obligation and spirit of the NPT, which explicitly calls for effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and the cessation of the nuclear arms race. The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of these weapons.

Consequently, the fact that nuclear disarmament is practically absent from this draft resolution severely undermines its credibility and erodes its effectiveness. It sends the wrong message to the international community, that the Security Council is selective, biased and engaged in a cherry-picking approach when it comes to the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The message this draft resolution sends is: Testing no, possession and modernization of stockpiles yes.

Fourthly, this draft resolution inequitably and unreasonably puts those that possess nuclear weapons with those that do not on an equal footing. It calls on States to refrain from conducting any nuclear-weapon test explosions and urges all States that have either not signed or not ratified the CTBT, particularly the eight remaining annex 2 States, to do so without delay. The draft resolution ought to have placed special responsibility on nuclear-weapon States and States non-party to the NPT. To equate States that are party to the NPT with those that are not, while simultaneously calling on both categories of States to refrain from nuclear testing, is an unconvincing argument. Rationally, the onus rests chiefly on those States that actually possess the capability to conduct nuclear tests.

Fifthly, the draft resolution's intrusive nature in the work of the Preparatory Commission and the Provisional Technical Secretariat is counterproductive. The Secretariat is, and should remain, a State-driven body that should solely determine its direction and preserve its prerogative to take decisions independently, without external interference. The Security Council should not be in a position to meddle in the work of the Secretariat and intrude in the practice of reporting its conduct. It is up to the Preparatory Commission to decide what is conducive and favourable to its work, in accordance with the Organization's priorities and aspirations of its member States. The draft resolution sets an unwelcome

precedent and may be perceived as an encroachment by the Security Council on the independent standing of international organizations and treaty bodies, dictating certain procedures and measures to be undertaken, despite not being endorsed by the collective will of its member States.

Sixthly, progress pertaining to the verification regime of the CTBT falls within the prerogative of the Preparatory Commission. According to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, 85 per cent of the verification regime has been successfully provisionally set up. Progress in all three pillars of the regime — namely, the International Monitoring System, the International Data Center and on-site inspection — is noted. The provisional nature of that regime should be maintained, in accordance with the Treaty provisions, and the official operational status launched upon the Treaty's entry into force.

The draft resolution also reflects a puzzling dilemma. While some States express enthusiasm here in the Council about the urgency of completing the verification regime, they contradictorily do not shoulder their responsibilities by ratifying the CTBT, and their legislative branches repeatedly refuse to ratify the Treaty, thereby precluding the possibility that the verification regime would come to fruition. We hope that there is some explanation for this dichotomous behaviour and contradictory message.

Egypt was among the first countries that negotiated and signed the CTBT. We fully support the purpose and objectives of the Treaty. We seek a world free of nuclear weapons, including nuclear testing. We swiftly and unequivocally condemn those that conduct nuclear tests. And we remain committed to the universality of the NPT and the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Egypt has been, and will continue to be, a staunch advocate of a robust nuclear non-proliferation regime that is geared towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The President: I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Egypt

The President: There were 14 votes in favour, none against and 1 abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2310 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

I call on His Excellency Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese abroad of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Ndiaye (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): We are gathered here again to express our commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty 20 years after it was opened for signature here in New York on 24 September 1996. The adoption of the Treaty was the result of grave concerns over an alarming nuclear arms race and an attempt to save the world from the terror that loomed over it. Over 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out between 1945 and 1996. Twenty years after the signing of that instrument, that number has drastically decreased to nine, which is still disconcerting, but promising, in our efforts to achieve the desired goal.

According to the Treaty, States parties pledged to refrain from all tests and nuclear explosions, whether for peaceful or military purposes and regardless of where they were conducted — in the atmosphe, underground, in outer space or under. Nonetheless, in spite of its scope and, in particular, its importance, the Treaty has not yet entered into force because of an insufficient number of ratifications by the annex 2 States. To date, 166 States are parties to the Treaty, including 36 of the 44 listed in the annex, whose ratifications are required for the Treaty to be enter into force. That shows the importance of resolution 2310 (2016), which the Council just dopted, with the support of the Senegalese delegation, to celebrate the twentietn anniversary of such an important instrument. I thank the American delegation for having submitted the present resolution and for leading the consultations that led to its adoption.

Because of its commitment to the ideal of a world free of nuclear weapons, Senegal has committed to

the goal of making this historic moment the start of a new era, marked by a renewal of the pledge to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. That is why the Senegalese delegation commends the importance given to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the crucial foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The United Nations can never state it enough: the main objective is not just non-proliferation but nuclear disarmament, pursuant to article VI of the NPT. Until that goal is achieved, it is crucial, if not necessary, to continue to strengthen, on theo ne hand, the commitment of the non-nuclear States to non-proliferation and, on the other hand, the determination of those who possess such weapons to adhere to negative security assurances. Senegal therefore implores all of the countries that have not yet expressed their consent to be bound by the Treaty, in particular annex 2 States, to take the appropriate measures in that regard to build a safer world.

Resolution 2310 (2016) takes notes of the joint ministerial statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty drafted by the permanent members of the Security Council, which highlights their commitment to nuclear disarmament and the entry into force of the Treaty and reaffirms the moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests and explosions, while awaiting the entry into force of this instrument.

I wish to reaffirm Senegal's commitment to disarmament and to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and by extension to the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established a nuclear-free-weapon zone in Africa. I would like to take this opportunity to invite the States Parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to honour their obligations, and the States that are not yet party to the Treaty, namely, the annex 2 States, to step up their ratification efforts for the good of the entire international community.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Ybáñez, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain.

Mr. Ybáñez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain co-sponsored resolution 2310 (2016) because we believe that it is an important step on the path to the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Although the Treaty has not yet entered into force, it is already a fundamental element of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. I welcome the presence at the Security Council talbe of Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and, of course, that of Under-Secretary-General Kim Won-soo. We are conveying an excellent message together as the Council, the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT to encourage its entry into force without further delay.

The Treaty has been signed by 183 States and ratified by 166 States. Spain ratified the Treaty in 1998. I would like to implore the States that have not already done so, in particular the States listed in annex 2, to ratify or sign the Treaty. This resolution is another step towards the full de-legitimization by the international community of nuclear tests, and it contributes to strengthening the prohibition on nuclear tests as a de facto international rule. However, the moratorium is not a replacement for the entry into force of the CTBT, which is our main aim.

In addition, I would like firmly to condemn the nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 6 January and 9 September, which were in violation of various Security Council resolutions. Such tests are a serious threat to international peace and security and to regional stability.

Lastly, the resolution that we have just adopted must serve to strengthen the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO. With this resolution, the Security Council acknowledges the maturity of the verification system set up by the Preparatory Commission and the work of the Provisional Technical Secretariat in that regard. I trust that the resolution will give the impetus needed to complete the International Monitoring System.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alok Sharma, Member of Parliament and Minister for Asia and the Pacific of the United Kingdom of Great Britain an Northern Ireland.

Mr. Sharma (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of the important resolution 2310 (2016). This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Today's resolution is both well-timed and an important contribution to the goals of the Treaty. Today's call for

the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a tangible step towards a safer and more stable world.

The United Kingdom was one of the first signatories to the CTBT in 1996 and we ratified it in 1998. We regret that the Treaty has not yet entered into force, but further ratifications would demonstrate the global commitment towards ending nuclear-test explosions. We welcome the newest ratifications, by Burma and Swaziland. They joined the 166 States in total to have done so. Further ratifications would also send a clear message to the global community that nuclear explosive testing will not be tolerated.

The entry into force of the Treaty has clear advantages for all of us. Such benefits include a fully operational International Monitoring System and an International Data Centre, as well as the on-site inspection element of the Treaty. Combined, that would ensure that any State tempted to conduct a nuclear explosive test would know that it could not do so without facing detection. It is worth remembering that, when the Treaty was written, no one knew if the International Monitoring System would actually be possible. Today, we know that it is. All State signatories have equal access to the regular data it provides, and such monitoring can only improve as the system continues to grow. It is now 89 per cent complete. The success of the system depends on the dedication and collaboration of many countries that have established stations.

Given the importance of those objectives and their contribution to effective nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures, it is regrettable that some chose not to vote in favour today. We believe that it was a well-intentioned and balanced Security Council resolution and we thank the United States for introducing it for adoption.

We have come a long way towards ending nuclear explosive testing. Only one State, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, continues to undertake such activity. We condemn the recent nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which as well as going against the spirit and purpose of the Treaty is a direct violation of binding Security Council resolutions. As the Council agreed only a fortnight ago, there is now a need to work immediately on further significant measures in response to provocations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United Kingdom will be consulting with our international partners to help deliver a robust response, making clear to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it must engage constructively with the international community.

In conclusion, the United Kingdom calls upon all those States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty, so as to bring it into force and so end explosive nuclear testing forever.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is committed to the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which, as is well-known, our country ratified as early as 2001. We hope that resolution 2310 (2016), adopted today, will help a maximum number of States, especially those listed in annex 2 to the CTBT, sign and ratify the Treaty.

We believe that the moratoriums on nuclear testing, as important as they are, cannot serve as a full-fledged replacement for legally binding international norms. The Treaty, rather than national moratoriums, should be the benchmark for States' responsible behaviour. Unfortunately, the pen that signed the Treaty, President Bill Clinton's — which Secretary of State Kerry mentioned this morning — was not that of President Barack Obama, and the United States has found itself unable to ratify the CTBT. We hope that the next President of the United States will be more zealous in his desire to see the Treaty ratified.

We would not want the adoption of this resolution to serve as an unwelcome precedent for the Security Council's interference in the remit of other international structures, or the creation of obligations under an international treaty for those States that have not joined that treaty. In this case, we feel we were able to avoid such a risk. Today, the Council adopted a balanced resolution that does not clash with the provisions of the CTBT. It is for that reason that we voted in favour of it.

The fact that the delegation of Ukraine always seems to step outside the parameters of our discussion at the Security Council has become an unfortunate tradition, and we do not intend to yield to such provocations.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Tomorrow will mark the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature in New York of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Twenty years ago, in order to comprehensively ban nuclear-test explosions and any other nuclear explosions, thereby effectively

advancing the process of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and enhancing international peace and security, the international community negotiated and concluded the CTBT. Over the past 20 years, the nuclear-test ban has become a common understanding of the international community.

Today's adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2310 (2016) is of great significance in commemorating the opening for signature of the Treaty, reaffirming the purpose of the nuclear-test ban and pushing for an early entry into force of the Treaty.

China has always stood for the comprehensive prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons. We have committed not to be the first-users of nuclear weapons and we have committed unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

China was among the first countries to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We have been steadfast in maintaining the object and purpose of the Treaty and in abiding by our nuclear-test moratorium commitment. We will continue to work with all sides to push for the early entry into force of the Treaty and make unremitting efforts for the realization of the comprehensive prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): France welcomes the adoption today of resolution 2310 (2016), which we co-sponsored, and thanks the United States for having sponsored it as well.

The resolution urges all States that have not done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to ensure its entry into force as soon as possible. It reaffirms the importance of nuclear-testing moratoriums and urges all States to refrain from conducting any type of nuclear explosion.

The CTBT is an essential step in the gradual implementation of the nuclear-disarmament process, and its entry into force is France's foremost priority in this area. The CTBT and national moratoriums are fundamental instruments for nuclear non-proliferation and international security. Its importance is all the clearer in the context of the serious and repeated acts committed by North Korea, which carried out a fifth nuclear test earlier this month. France and the Security Council condemned these provocations, which are very serious ones, with the utmost firmness.

It is crucial that all States live up to their responsibilities today by heeding our call for the universalization of the CTBT, as set forth in the resolution we have just adopted. This is especially true for those States whose signature and ratification are necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty.

France was among the first States to sign the CTBT, in September 1996, and to ratify it, in 1998. As a responsible nuclear Power, we have taken strong and exemplary steps, such as the dismantling of our nuclear-testing site in the Pacific Ocean and putting an end to our production of plutonium and uranium for nuclear weapons.

We align ourselves all States members of the Security Council in sending this message of mobilization for a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. Such a prohibition has become an example of responsible behaviour at the international level. Only one State has conducted nuclear testing in the twenty-first century, and its behaviour is unanimously condemned at every opportunity.

On the twentieth anniversary of the Treaty, France wishes to reiterate its resolute commitment to the entry into force of the CTBT as soon as possible. With this resolution, the responsibility of every State is engaged today more than ever.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an important pillar of the nuclear-disarmament regime. Japan is playing a leading role as a co-facilitator of the early entry into force of the CTBT.

Japan welcomes the adoption of resolution 2310 (2016), which calls upon all States to refrain from conducting any nuclear tests. We believe that this will boost momentum towards nuclear disarmament as well as the early entry into force of the Treaty.

This resolution clearly demonstrates the collective desire of the international community to promote the nuclear-test ban. Japan appreciates the leadership of the United States on this resolution and is happy to be a sponsor.

North Korea has conducted its second nuclear test in a single year. These nuclear tests by North Korea are flagrant and unacceptable violations of

the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2270 (2016), and pose a serious challenge to the global disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Japan strongly condemns the tests by North Korea and continues to demand that North Korea stop these provocations and immediately comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Security Council has already agreed to begin work immediately on appropriate measures, under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, for a Security Council draft resolution. Japan looks forward to closely working with other Council members to that end.

In conclusion, Japan reiterates its commitment to working with the relevant countries on the early entry into force of the CTBT.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela voted in favour of resolution 2310 (2016), pertaining to the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), because we believe it to be a positive initiative for making progress towards the priority objective of nuclear disarmament and for countering the threat posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use, which would have devastating consequences for humankind.

Although the Security Council has spoken on this matter today, we believe that it is up to the Preparatory Commission and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBT to address this important matter in line with their mandates.

The elimination of nuclear weapons requires the joint efforts of the States Members of the United Nations to ensure the effective implementation of multilateral commitments leading to the elimination of nuclear arsenals, in line with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to which my country is a State party.

Although we welcome the resolution's contribution in the area of peace and security, we would have liked the text to include more categorical language with regard to the commitment that States possessing nuclear weapons should assume in order to eliminate those arsenals. We also believe that the mention in the resolution of the joint statement by the five permanent members of the Council dilutes the commitment of the nuclear-weapon Powers when it comes to the goal of disarmament and adhering to the provisions of the NPT and the CTBT.

On the twentieth anniversary of the CTBT, we would like to stress its contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we urge the eight remaining annex 2 States, whose ratifications are needed for its entry into force, to sign or ratify this legal instrument without further delay.

My delegation reiterates that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the Charter of the United Nation and a crime against humanity. It is also a violation of international law and international humanitarian law, as was expressed by the International Court of Justice in its 1996 advisory opinion on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/51/218, annex).

In that regard, we call on all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear tests, including sub-critical experiments and those carried out via simulation, with the aim of developing and improving nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We believe that such actions are detrimental to the objectives of disarmament, the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the provisions of the NPT and CTBT, as they weaken the impact of those instruments as disarmament measures.

The Latin American region has shown its decisive support for the CTBT, as can be seen in the special declaration, issued in connection with the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT, adopted by the Heads of State of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) at their Summit held in Quito in January. My country is also party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area. In addition to those achievements, I would mention the declaration of the second CELAC Summit held in Havana, in January 2014, which declared Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace.

We continue to encourage the international community to redouble efforts to give effect to the commitment agreed to at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was reaffirmed at subseqeunt conferences, with regard to

the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That would be a measure of particular importance for peace and security in that troubled region.

In that context, we also need concrete measures on disarmament and non proliferation on the part of States that possess nuclear weapons, in line with the obligations incumbent upon them under article VI of the NPT and measures adopted at successive NPT Review Conferences since 2000.

We reiterate the call for the negotiation and conclusion of universal legally binding instrument on unconditional security guarantees to all non-nuclear-weapon States, with a view to achieving the complete elimination of this category of weapons of mass destruction, irrespective of its type or geographical location.

Finally, once again, we urge States that have not yet done to sign or ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the only viable legal instrument for prohibiting nuclear tests.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): The Republic of Angola very much welcomes and is satisfied with the adoption of resolution 2310 (2016) this morning.

Having signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty right after the conclusion of the Treaty negotiations, Angola ratified it only in 2015 due to the military conflict with apartheid South Africa, that, as is known, disposed of a nuclear arsenal. After the end of apartheid, South Africa took the wise decision to give up its nuclear arsenal. By doing so, it contributed decisively in materializing the African position enshrined in the Treaty of Pelindaba, which made Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The adoption of today's resolution takes place just a few days after the Security Council considered the question of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula. By adopting resolution 2310 (2016), the Council is taking a comprehensive stand on the issue of nuclear tests. We would like to make three comments on the issue.

First, resolution 2310 (2016) makes real sense if it represents an effective contribution to the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty through its ratification by all Members of the United Nations and the entire international community.

Secondly, the resolution makes full sense in the case the Treaty constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, thereby contributing to the attainment of a nuclear-weapon-free world. More than instruments of war, nuclear weapons are instruments of annihilation, since their objective is basically the destruction of human lives and of the means of human existence, without a real military purpose.

Yesterday in the General Assembly debate (see A/71/PV.15) we heard very poignant testimony by the President of the Marshall Islands about the tragic human and environmental consequences for the South Pacific region caused by the nuclear tests that took place in the region some decades ago.

Thirdly, Angola voted in favour of this resolution as a singn of its clear stance against nuclear proliferation. We would welcome the further adoption by the Security Council of clear measures, without double standards, to condemn nuclear testsa in the different regions where we still see the question of proliferation prevailing. We believe that, with double standards and without our clear stance, we would be weakening the resolution we have just adopted this morning.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): Today, the Security Council delivers on its commitment to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on 24 September 1996. Malaysia wishes to convey its appreciation to delegations and contributors involved in negotiating the text for their constructive engagement and tremendous work in that regard. We remain hopeful that resolution 2310 (2016) is a positive move, from the standpoint of the Council, to encourage the early entry into force of the CTBT. In that context, Malaysia voted in favour of the resolution.

It must also be emphasized that our commitment and that of the international community towards general and complete disarmament can be realized only through the entry into force of the Treaty. We wish to put on record that, while we need to see incrementally positive progress to ensure that the CTBT enters into force, we iterate that these measures do not have the same permanent and legally binding effect to end nuclear-weapon testing and all other nuclear explosions.

My delegation notes with serious concern that the CTBT has yet to enter into force. As we celebrate two decades since the Treaty was opened for signature in

1996, we firmly believe that more could be done to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty, including maintaining all existing moratoriums on nuclear-weapon-test explosions.

As the CTBT contains no provisions that commit the nuclear-weapon States and States with nuclear-weapon capabilities to total nuclear disarmament, the call enshrined in the Treaty cannot be disregarded and needs to be further recognized. My delegation has some reservations that resolution 2310 (2016) does not sufficiently recognize that fact.

While we support the spirit and intent of the commemoration of the CTBT resolution, the resolution is not a substitute for, nor should it be construed as, a sufficient effort by all CTBT signatory States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States. Therefore, it is crucial that States with nuclear-weapon capabilities undertake their responsibilities to ratify the Treaty. In that respect, we urge the annex 2 States to do so at the earliest possibility.

Our responsibility is henceforth far from complete. We remain committed to working together in good faith and with strengthened resolve to facilitate the implementation of resolution 2310 (2016). While fully understanding that the text is a product of constructive negotiations, the fact remains that the challenge ahead lies in ensuring that there should be no precedent on referencing documents in Council resolutions that can be agreed to by only a handful of States. That is the basis for Malaysia's position of ensuring such a resolution secures the broadest support possible, and that the concerns of all members of the Council are taken on board in a balanced manner. Otherwise, this negates the authority and credibility of a resolution that is meant to provide guidance in our common pursuit of maintaining international peace and security. In terms of being constructive, allowing all Council members an equal opportunity and ample time to carefully review the provisions of the text would encourage our joint effort in facilitating implementation.

Malaysia also underscores that it is the responsibility of all members of the international community to abide by the obligations outlined in the regime under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. On that basis, the pursuit of general and complete nuclear disarmament must remain, first and foremost, a shared and enduring commitment of all of us here.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay voted in favour of resolution 2310 (2016) because of the intrinsic importance of the subject and because we believe in the need to work towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The CTBT, whose entry into force we encourage today, is a keystone of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. As such, it will contribute to strengthening international peace and security in addition to helping bring about a safer world.

Promoting the universality and rapid entry into force of the CTBT, which has been open for signature for 20 years and which today still needs ratification by the eight States listed in annex 2, is a priority in order to address the danger posed by nuclear-weapon tests to the international community. In that regard, Uruguay once again urges States to ratify the text of the Treaty, in particular those annex 2 States whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force. We would encourage them to take this initiative and ensure the appropriate ratification of the Treaty as soon as possible. The greatest responsibility for the entry into force of the Treaty falls on the shoulders of those States possessing nuclear weapons.

Uruguay, as a country commited to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation system, advocates for a world that is free of nuclear weapons. The mere existence of nuclear weapons is itself a threat to peace and security in the world, and their total elimination is the only guarantee that they will not be used.

This meeting is also an opportunity for us to remember the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. This is something that has been examined at various international conferences, where it has been made clear that there are limitations in terms of the prevention of the use of nuclear weapons and that we are truly defenceless, no matter whether they are used offensively or accidentally. The humanitarian consequences of destruction with these weapons is something that should lead to an express and immediate ban, and for this reason we appeal for the fulfilment and implementation of all of the commitments undertaken in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Permanent Representative of New Zealand.

Anniversaries of important events are rarely straightforward celebrations. That is certainly the case for today's anniversary marking 20 years since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Treaty's adoption, in this building two decades ago, occasioned considerable euphoria. Something that had seemed impossible — because it had been so strongly opposed by a number of significant countries until just a few years before — was now a done deal. Like other long-term supporters of nuclear disarmament, New Zealand believed something of real significance had been achieved.

Prior to the Treaty's adoption, New Zealand had vigorously pursued the objective of a nuclear-test-ban treaty for more than three decades. Twice, with support from others in the Pacific region, New Zealand had even gone to the International Court of Justice in an effort to stop the nuclear testing, which had inflamed our region, damaged the Pacific environment and caused deep tensions with some of our oldest friends and allies. Largely in response to testing in our region, the countries of the South Pacific had also adopted and brought into force the South Pacific Nuclear-Free-Zone Treaty.

For us, and for the Pacific region, the banning of all nuclear test explosions was the culmination of a long-sought-after goal. For New Zealand, therefore, there is real cause to remember and celebrate that historic moment in 1996 when the CTBT was adopted. However, as others know only too well, there is cause, too, for deep disappointment that 20 years later the Treaty is still not in force.

New Zealand supported the initiative by the United States to create new momentum for the Treaty's entry into force and voted in favour of today's resolution 2310 (2016). We join others in calling upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty — especially the remaining eight States whose ratification is needed for entry into force — to do so as soon as possible. Until they do, we will not, as a matter of international treaty law, have closed the door on nuclear testing.

A strong international norm against testing has been created by the Treaty. That norm is being complied with by all States except the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. North Korea's repeated nuclear tests are an affront to the international community's commitment, through the CTBT and the ongoing moratoriums against testing, to end the era of nuclear tests, as well as blatant violations of the resolutions of the Security Council and of that country's commitments under the Charter of the United Nations.

While the CTBT is an important instrument in its own right, it is important to remember, as others have noted today, that it sits within a wider nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation context. That context would have been better reflected in today's resolution 2310 (2016) had the draft contained stronger language on the need for progress on nuclear disarmament, as New Zealand and others had proposed.

New Zealand also shares the reservations of other Council members about the reference in the resolution to the joint statement by five nuclear-weapon States that are also permanent members of the Council. While recognizing the value of the commitments in the joint statement, we are uncomfortable with the Council being used to validate the perspectives of any sub-group of Council members, whether they be permanent or elected, nuclear-weapon-holding or non-nuclear-free.

While we must continue to call for States to join the Treaty, after 20 years we also recognize that simply restating commitments to the entry into force of the CTBT is hardly progress towards nuclear disarmament. That is particularly true in the light of the modernization programmes that are under way in all States that possess nuclear weapons and which cut across the contribution that the CTBT can make to nuclear disarmament. For as long as some States retain nuclear weapons, and declare them to be essential for national security, others will seek them. That highlights the mutually reinforcing nature of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The neglect of one will set back the other.

New Zealand looks forward to working with the wider United Nations membership during the current session of the General Assembly both to promote the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to reinvigorate efforts towards nuclear disarmament in line with the long-standing commitments set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): I will be very brief. I would like to make a point of clarification for everyone's benefit.

As we are discussing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which constitutes an integral part of the global security infrastructure, we are convinced that, if any part or element of that structure is damaged or violated, as it was, it reflects negatively on the stability of the global security architecture. We therefore see a very clear link between what my Minister has just said and today's topic of discussion. If some fail to see that linkage, it only demonstrates a selective approach to matters of global security.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.